

O M A N
عُضَائِد
D A I L Y

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PAGES 20 BAISAS 200

SUNRISE 06:19 AM

PRAYER TIMINGS

FAJR 05:01 AM

DHUHR 11:56 PM

ASR 03:06 PM

MAGHRIB 05:28 PM

ISHA 06:41 PM

20

THE SYMPHONY OF SEA AND PALM TREE UNFOLDS IN MUSCAT

INBRIEF

HIS MAJESTY’S GREETINGS TO ANGOLA PRESIDENT

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President João Lourenço of the Republic of Angola on his country’s National Day. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to President João and the people of his country. His Majesty also wished the bilateral relations of cooperation and partnership further growth.

OMAN AT ANGOLA INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY FETE

Delegated by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, will participate in the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Angola, on Tuesday. This participation is in response to an invitation from President João Lourenço of the Republic of Angola.

PLAN FOR FIRST CAR FACTORY IN SALALAH

A cooperation agreement was signed in the Salalah Free Zone to prepare the technical and economic feasibility study for the establishment of the first car factory in the Wilayat of Salalah, Dhofar Governorate. The agreement, signed between Salalah Global City Company (one of the companies operating in the zone) and the Chinese company Jiangsu Changhong Intelligent Equipment (specialising in the manufacture of car production and assembly lines), reflects the confidence of international companies in the investment environment that characterises the Wilayat of Salalah. This is due to its advanced infrastructure, strategic location connected to ports and regional markets, as well as the incentives and facilities it provides to investors in various industrial sectors. **DETAILS ON P3**

CAR EXPLOSION IN INDIAN CAPITAL KILLS EIGHT



Security personnel stand beside a charred vehicle at the blast site after an explosion near the Red Fort in the old quarters of Delhi on Monday. — AFP

At least eight people were killed on Monday in a car explosion near the historic Red Fort in a densely populated area of the Indian capital Delhi, a police spokesperson said, a rare blast in the heavily guarded city of more than 30 million people. The exact cause of the blast is being investigated, said the police spokesperson, Sanjay Tyagi. However, India’s financial capital of Mumbai as well as its most populous state of Uttar Pradesh, which borders Delhi, went on high security alert after the blast, local media reported. At least 20 people were injured in the explosion, TV channels reported, as ambulances raced to the scene.

AL AMERAT RETAIN HM HOCKEY CUP AFTER PENALTY SHOOT-OUT WIN



Al Amerat retained their title for the second consecutive season after being crowned champions of the 55th edition of His Majesty’s Hockey Cup 2025, defeating Ahli Sidab 4–2 in a penalty shoot-out following a thrilling 4–4 draw in regular time. The final took place on Monday evening at the Hockey Oman Stadium in Al Amerat, under the auspices of HH Sayyid Dr Fahd bin Al Julanda al Said, Vice-Chancellor of SQU, in the presence of several dignitaries, officials from the Oman Hockey Association, and a large crowd of enthusiastic fans. **DETAILS ON P10**

US envoy to press Gaza truce

US mediators met Israel’s prime minister on Monday, with attention turning to the second, far more complex, phase of the Gaza ceasefire deal and the immediate problem of a standoff over a group of fighters still holed up in tunnels.

The meeting between US President Donald Trump’s son-in-law Jared Kushner and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu comes a month after Washington and regional states pressed Israel and Hamas to a truce after two years of devastating war.

However, any progress in Trump’s ceasefire plan will not only require both sides to agree on issues that have foiled previous peacemaking efforts, but also to resolve the immediate stalemate over the trapped Hamas fighters.

Meanwhile, a deadly incident shook the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip on Monday, as the Israeli military said its troops had killed two Palestinians who posed a threat.

The civil defence in the coastal region reported the two deaths in an Israeli attack near the southern city of Khan Yunis, including that of a minor.



A deadly incident shook the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip on Monday. — Reuters

The civil defence in the coastal region reported the two deaths in an Israeli attack near the southern city of Khan Yunis, including that of a minor.

There have been similar incidents in recent weeks. According to Gaza’s health authority, more than 240 people have been killed in Israeli attacks since the ceasefire began.

More than 69,000 Palestinians have reportedly been killed in the Gaza war, which began in October 2023, although the number cannot

be independently verified. US envoy Steve Witkoff last week described efforts to resolve the standoff by giving the fighters safe passage back into Gaza areas in return for disarming as a test case for future steps in the wider ceasefire plan. — Reuters **SEE ALSO P6**

No link between paracetamol and autism: Study

PARIS: There is no clear link between pregnant women taking the common painkiller paracetamol and autism in their children, despite repeated claims otherwise by Donald Trump, according to the most comprehensive review of the existing evidence published on Monday.

In September, the US president sparked outrage among the medical community by claiming that paracetamol — also known as acetaminophen - was associated with higher rates



Existing evidence does not show a clear link between in utero exposure to paracetamol and autism and ADHD in offspring.

of autism. Trump urged pregnant women to “tough it out” rather than take paracetamol, comments which health researchers warned could scare women off their safest option to treat pain — and risked further stigmatising autistic people. The World Health Organization has emphasised that there is no robust evidence showing that paracetamol — which is the main ingredient in massively popular painkillers such as Tylenol and Panadol —

causes autism. On Monday, an “umbrella” review of all the scientific research yet conducted on the subject was published in the British medical journal BMJ. “Existing evidence does not show a clear link between in utero exposure to paracetamol and autism and ADHD in offspring,” the team wrote. There have been several previous studies which suggested a possible link between paracetamol and autism. — AFP

OMAN

SHORT TAKES



The awards aim to promote a culture of scientific research.

OMANI DOCTORS
WIN FOUR AWARDS
IN POLAND

RZESZÓW: An Omani delegation comprising doctors and medical students from Sultan Qaboos University, the University Medical City, and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland won four awards at the Rzeszów International Medical Students’ Association Conference held in Rzeszów, Poland.

One of the most prominent scientific conferences dedicated to medical students and doctors in the early stages of their research careers, the conference aims to encourage the exchange of knowledge and promote a culture of scientific research, bringing together participants from around the world.

Dr Abdullah bin Mohammed al Lawati, a graduate of the College of Medicine and Health Sciences at Sultan Qaboos University and an intern at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital, received two awards for best research: one for his research poster and the other for his visual presentation in the fields of surgery and basic sciences. The research was supervised by Dr Hanan bint Mustafa al Lawatiyah from the Oman College of Health Sciences and Dr Srijit Das from the College of Medicine and Health Sciences at Sultan Qaboos University.

Azzan bin Juma al Wahshi, a final-year student at the College of Medicine and Health Sciences at Sultan Qaboos University, won an award for best research in the field of psychiatry, supervised by Dr Hamad bin Nasser al Sinawi from Sultan Qaboos University Hospital. Ayman bin Nasser al Habsi, a student at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, won an award for best research in surgery, supervised by Dr Mohammed al Abri from the Royal Hospital at the Ministry of Health. Salman bin Yasser al Shukaili, a fifth-year student at the College of Medicine and Health Sciences at Sultan Qaboos University, presented a distinguished visual presentation on surgery at the conference.

MOH URGES
MEASURES TO
PREVENT MPOX



STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 10

The Ministry of Health (MoH) has urged the public to take preventive measures against Mpox (formerly Monkeypox), an infectious disease caused by the monkeypox virus. According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, two types of the virus exist: clade I and clade II. Both spread in the same way and can be prevented using similar methods.

More than 40,000 cases of clade I monkeypox have been reported in several countries in Central and Eastern Africa, while clade II cases continue to occur at low levels in many countries worldwide.

The symptoms are: It often begins with fever, headache, muscle aches and fatigue (similar to flu-like symptoms). Followed by a distinct rash that can appear anywhere on the body, including the face, genitals and anus. The rash progresses from macules → papules → vesicles → pustules → scabs.

It spreads from direct skin-to-skin contact with an infected person, especially with a rash; touching contaminated items like bedding, towels, or clothing; and prolonged face-to-face contact via respiratory droplets. The prevention tips include washing hands frequently with soap and water.

Avoid close physical contact with anyone showing Mpox symptoms. Avoid touching contaminated objects.

OMAN AND
BOSNIA
HOLD TALKS
TO BOOST
BILATERAL
COOPERATION

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, on Monday received Elmedin Konaković, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who is currently on an official visit to the Sultanate of Oman.

The two sides held political talks which reviewed the bilateral cooperation between the two countries and means of enhancing them in various political, diplomatic, economic and cultural spheres in a manner that serves mutual interests.

The two sides exchanged views on several regional and international issues and challenges of mutual concern. They stressed their two countries’ commitment to pursuing dialogue, peaceful, and legal means



Sayyid Badr holds talks with Elmedin Konaković. — ONA

to achieve stability and peace, and address issues in a spirit of justice and wisdom. They affirmed their mutual keenness to develop tourism and educational opportunities, encourage investments and mutual visits, and support communication

between the different sectors of the two countries, which would bring mutual benefits. The talks were attended by Razim Čolić, Ambassador of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Sultanate of Oman. — ONA

Oman, Bahrain review ties
uniting both countries

PRINCE

Salman bin Hamad al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain, on Monday received Sayyid

Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidy, Minister of Interior, at the Cabinet headquarters in Manama.

During the meeting, the strong bilateral relations uniting the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Bahrain were reviewed, along with means to support and enhance them in various fields. The meeting also discussed a number of issues of mutual interest.

The meeting was attended on the Omani side by Maj Gen Abdullah bin Ali al Harthy, Assistant Inspector General of Police and Customs for Operations, and Sayyid Faisal bin Harib al Busaidy, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Kingdom of Bahrain. It was attended on the Bahraini side by Gen Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah al Khalifa, Minister of Interior, and a number of officials from both sides.

Meanwhile, Sayyid Hamoud visited the Open Prisons Complex in the Kingdom of Bahrain. This came within the framework of the Interior Minister’s official visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain. He was accompanied during the visit by Gen Shaikh Rashed bin Abdullah al Khalifa, Minister of Interior of Bahrain.

Upon their arrival at the complex, they were received by a number of senior officials from the Bahraini Ministry of Interior. At the beginning of the visit, the Minister



Sayyid Hamoud visited the Open Prisons Complex in the Kingdom of Bahrain on Monday. — ONA

of Interior listened to a comprehensive introductory briefing presented by the Open Prisons’ management. The briefing covered the objectives of these correctional facilities and their role in rehabilitating inmates and preparing them for integration into society after the completion of their sentences.

The briefing included a presentation of the administration’s initiatives in the fields of education, vocational training, and psychological and social rehabilitation, in addition to reviewing the procedures followed to ensure the rights of inmates and provide a humane correctional environment that adheres to the standards of justice and dignity, in line with humanitarian principles and best international practices in this field.

Following this, the Minister of Interior conducted a field tour of the administration’s facilities, which included training workshops, education halls, and various service facilities.

Sayyid Hamoud lauded the advanced administrative organisation and quality programmes he witnessed, which reflect the great attention the Kingdom of Bahrain accords to developing the correctional work system.

He pointed to the importance of continuing the exchange of visits and expertise to contribute to the advancement of the correctional work system and the efficiency of prison management, thereby serving mutual interests. — ONA

Majlis Ash’shura discusses annual plans

MUSCAT: The Majlis Ash’shura on Monday held its Second Ordinary Session chaired by Khalid bin Hilal al Maawali, Chairman of Majlis Ash’shura.

The Majlis discussed the work plans of the Standing Committees for the Third Ordinary Session of the Tenth Term.

The chairmen of the Majlis’ Standing Committees provided a brief explanation of the contents of the annual plans and executive programmes, including draft laws, proposals for draft laws and a number of proposals submitted for study by each committee according to its specialisation.

During the session, the Majlis also discussed the themes of the Ministerial Statements for the Third Ordinary Session.

A set of themes aimed at enhancing communication with the executive branch and discussing the priorities of economic and social development in the coming phase was adopted.

The session also included a discussion of the report of the



A set of themes aimed at enhancing communication with the executive branch and discussing the priorities of economic and social development in the coming phase was adopted. — ONA

Services and Public Facilities Committee on the Draft Law on National Geospatial Data and Information, which aims to regulate the collection and use of geographical data in line with modern technical developments in this field, and contributes to enhancing development planning based on accurate information.

During the session, the

Economic and Financial Committee presented its report on the Draft Law of Unified Industrial Regulation for the GCC States.

In the same context, the Majlis Ash’shura reviewed during the session the report of the Economic and Financial Committee on the proposal regarding the assessment of the competitiveness and

attractiveness of the Omani business environment and the evaluation of the reality of local industries in the Sultanate of Oman.

APPROVES COMMITTEE
ELECTIONS RESULTS

Meanwhile, the Majlis Ash’shura Office, during its meeting on Monday, approved the results of the Standing Committee elections and the final lists of membership for members of the Majlis’ Standing Committees for the half-term.

This approval allows the members to commence their work in the Majlis’ Standing Committees by studying a range of topics included in their approved plans during today’s second Majlis session.

This occurred during the Second Ordinary Meeting of the Majlis’ Office for the Third Ordinary Session of the Tenth Term (2023-2027), chaired by Khalid bin Hilal al Maawali, Chairman of Majlis Ash’shura.

During the meeting, several ministerial responses were reviewed. — ONA



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SHORT TAKES



Salalah Global City Company and Jiangsu Changhong Intelligent Equipment have signed the agreement. — ONA

PACT SIGNED TO SET UP OMAN’S FIRST CAR PLANT

SALALAH: A cooperation agreement was signed on Monday in the Salalah Free Zone to prepare the technical and economic feasibility study for the establishment of the first car factory in the Wilayat of Salalah, Dhofar Governorate.

The agreement, signed between Salalah Global City Company (one of the companies operating in the zone) and the Chinese company 'Jiangsu Changhong Intelligent Equipment' (specialising in the manufacture of car production and assembly lines), reflects the confidence of international companies in the investment environment that characterises the Wilayat of Salalah.

This is due to its advanced infrastructure, strategic location connected to ports and regional markets, as well as the incentives and facilities it provides to investors in various industrial sectors.

'Jiangsu Changhong Intelligent Equipment' is considered one of the most prominent Chinese companies in the smart systems industry for industrial equipment and car production lines. It has a proven track record of cooperation with major global brands such as BMW, Volkswagen, Jaguar, Land Rover, Ford and BYD, in addition to over 30 years of experience in establishing integrated car factories worldwide. — ONA

2,000 SEEDLINGS PLANTED FOR 10M INITIATIVE



EA volunteers took part in the planting. — ONA

AL BURAIMI: The Environment Authority’s department in Al Buraimi Governorate carried out a programme whereby 2,000 seedlings of local trees were planted in the Wilayat of Mahadha. The programme formed part of the ‘National Initiative to Plant 10 Million Trees.’

As part of the programme, personnel of the Environment Authority and volunteers planted 1,000 seedlings in the wilayat, while Al Balowra National Trading Company planted another set of 1,000 seedlings.

The programme was in pursuance of efforts undertaken by the Environment Authority to expand green cover, combat desertification and augment the sustainability of ecosystems in the different governorates of the Sultanate of Oman. — ONA

Academy for Defence Studies Board holds meeting

MUSCAT: The Board of Trustees of the Academy for Strategic and Defence Studies held its annual meeting on Monday. The meeting was chaired by HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs and Chairman of the Academy’s Board of Trustees.

The meeting was attended by HH Sayyid Dr Fahd bin Al Julanda al Said, Vice-Chancellor of SQU, Lt Gen Hasan bin Mohsin al Shraiqi, Inspector General of Police and Customs, Dr Rahma bint Ibrahim



HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said chaired the Academy's Board of Trustees meeting. — ONA

al Mahrouqiyah, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Dr Said al Saqri, Minister of Economy, Vice Admiral Abdullah al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan’s Armed Forces, Maj Gen Sulaiman al Zakwani, Secretary-General for Military Affairs at the Royal Office, Maj Gen Hamid Sakroon, Chairman of the Academy, and Air Commodore Ali al Abri, Director-General of Studies and Academic Affairs at the Academy (Rapporteur of the Meeting). — ONA

Women engineers forum unites Arab, GCC leaders

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

UNDER The auspices of Dr Laila bint Ahmed al Najjar, Minister of Social Development, the Oman Society of Engineers, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development, inaugurated the Omani Women Engineers Forum under the theme 'Engineering Across Generations' on November 10-11.

The two-day event brought together pioneering female engineers and leaders from Oman and across the Arab and Gulf regions to enhance professional development, exchange expertise, and highlight women's growing contributions to national and regional development.

Eng Fouad bin Abdullah al Kindi, Chairman of the Oman Society of Engineers, said the forum reaffirms the Society's commitment to recognising the significant achievements of women engineers, past and present, and to supporting their future leadership roles. He noted the collaboration with the Arab Women Engineers Committee of the Federation of Arab Engineers as a step towards strengthening Arab engineering integration and



The Omani Women Engineers Forum was held under the theme 'Engineering Across Generations.'

advancing knowledge sharing.

Eng Rahma al Musharifi, Head of the Omani Women Engineers Committee, emphasised that the forum serves as a national platform connecting women engineers across Oman.

Prof Khalifa al Jabri, Sultan Qaboos University, highlighted the importance of recognising women's vital role in shaping the engineering landscape and called for recommendations to enhance their participation in decision-making and professional unions.

Featuring more than 24 scientific papers from Oman and across the Arab world, the forum explored themes of professional growth, sustainability, and the impact of digital and climate transformations on the engineering field.

With participation from leading institutions — including the Federation of Arab Engineers, the Arab Women Engineers Committee, and the Arab Council for Creativity and Innovation — the forum stands as a testament to regional collaboration.

The forum explored the impact of digital and climate transformations on the engineering field

Mezi tree is Musandam’s symbol of nature

KHASAB: The Mezi tree, a distinctive environmental and cultural emblem of Musandam Governorate, stands as a symbol of resilience and harmony with nature. Its presence on the rugged mountain slopes and valleys embodies the spirit of endurance and adaptation to the harsh climatic conditions — reflecting the deep-rooted values of Musandam’s people in patience, coexistence and respect for their environment.

Eng Noura al Shihi, Head of the Biodiversity and Vegetation Development Department at the Environment Directorate in Musandam, explained that the Mezi tree thrives in rocky, temperate environments, particularly in the Al Say area of Khasab.



It plays a vital ecological role in maintaining the natural balance of mountainous regions, helping to reduce soil erosion, providing habitats for wildlife, and offering shade and shelter in arid areas where vegetation is sparse. Naturally found in the mountains of Musandam and parts of the Eastern Hajar range

at elevations above 1,000 metres, the Mezi tree — belonging to the legume family — is an evergreen species that can reach up to three metres in height. It bears pinkish-white flowers and small, hard, hazelnut-shaped fruits covered in fine brown fuzz. Classified as 'Near Threatened' on the IUCN Red List, the species requires urgent conservation measures to ensure its survival in the wild.

Al Shihi highlighted the need for coordinated official and community efforts to protect the Mezi tree from threats such as overgrazing and random uprooting. She called for awareness campaigns, afforestation initiatives and mountain ecosystem rehabilitation to preserve

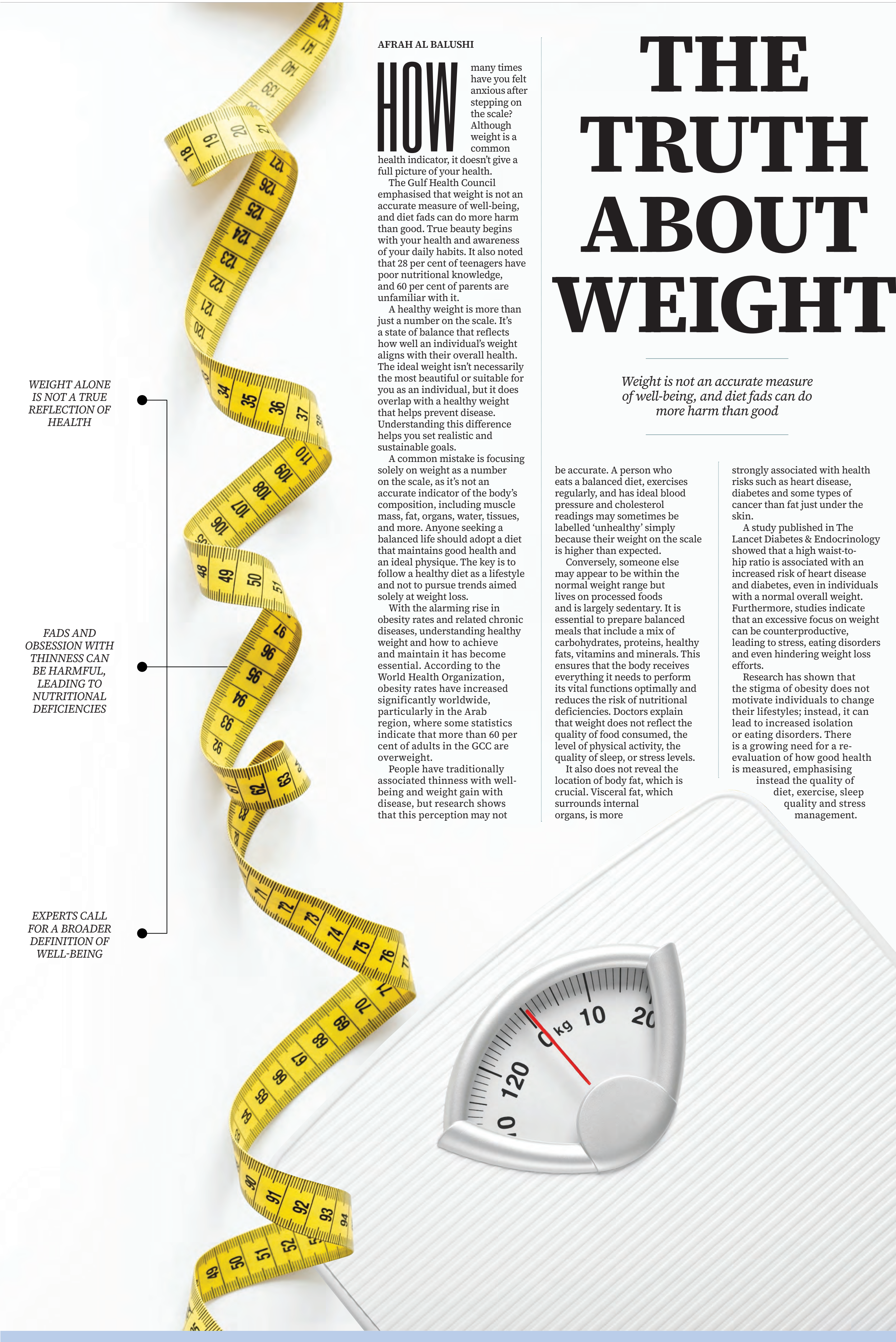
this vital species for future generations.

Beyond its environmental value, the Mezi tree holds deep cultural significance for Musandam’s people.

It features in local folklore and heritage, symbolising generosity, resilience, and a profound connection to the land. Its hard wood is traditionally used in crafting the 'Jarz stick', an emblem of authentic Omani heritage, as well as in agricultural tools and traditional wooden items reflecting the craftsmanship of local artisans.

Al Shihi emphasised that protecting the Mezi tree means safeguarding an integral part of Musandam’s environmental and cultural identity. — ONA

SPOTLIGHT



WEIGHT ALONE
IS NOT A TRUE
REFLECTION OF
HEALTH

FADS AND
OBSESSION WITH
THINNESS CAN
BE HARMFUL,
LEADING TO
NUTRITIONAL
DEFICIENCIES

EXPERTS CALL
FOR A BROADER
DEFINITION OF
WELL-BEING

AFRAH AL BALUSHI

HOW many times have you felt anxious after stepping on the scale? Although weight is a common health indicator, it doesn't give a full picture of your health.

The Gulf Health Council emphasised that weight is not an accurate measure of well-being, and diet fads can do more harm than good. True beauty begins with your health and awareness of your daily habits. It also noted that 28 per cent of teenagers have poor nutritional knowledge, and 60 per cent of parents are unfamiliar with it.

A healthy weight is more than just a number on the scale. It's a state of balance that reflects how well an individual's weight aligns with their overall health. The ideal weight isn't necessarily the most beautiful or suitable for you as an individual, but it does overlap with a healthy weight that helps prevent disease. Understanding this difference helps you set realistic and sustainable goals.

A common mistake is focusing solely on weight as a number on the scale, as it's not an accurate indicator of the body's composition, including muscle mass, fat, organs, water, tissues, and more. Anyone seeking a balanced life should adopt a diet that maintains good health and an ideal physique. The key is to follow a healthy diet as a lifestyle and not to pursue trends aimed solely at weight loss.

With the alarming rise in obesity rates and related chronic diseases, understanding healthy weight and how to achieve and maintain it has become essential. According to the World Health Organization, obesity rates have increased significantly worldwide, particularly in the Arab region, where some statistics indicate that more than 60 per cent of adults in the GCC are overweight.

People have traditionally associated thinness with well-being and weight gain with disease, but research shows that this perception may not

THE TRUTH ABOUT WEIGHT

Weight is not an accurate measure of well-being, and diet fads can do more harm than good

be accurate. A person who eats a balanced diet, exercises regularly, and has ideal blood pressure and cholesterol readings may sometimes be labelled 'unhealthy' simply because their weight on the scale is higher than expected.

Conversely, someone else may appear to be within the normal weight range but lives on processed foods and is largely sedentary. It is essential to prepare balanced meals that include a mix of carbohydrates, proteins, healthy fats, vitamins and minerals. This ensures that the body receives everything it needs to perform its vital functions optimally and reduces the risk of nutritional deficiencies. Doctors explain that weight does not reflect the quality of food consumed, the level of physical activity, the quality of sleep, or stress levels.

It also does not reveal the location of body fat, which is crucial. Visceral fat, which surrounds internal organs, is more

strongly associated with health risks such as heart disease, diabetes and some types of cancer than fat just under the skin.

A study published in The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology showed that a high waist-to-hip ratio is associated with an increased risk of heart disease and diabetes, even in individuals with a normal overall weight. Furthermore, studies indicate that an excessive focus on weight can be counterproductive, leading to stress, eating disorders and even hindering weight loss efforts.

Research has shown that the stigma of obesity does not motivate individuals to change their lifestyles; instead, it can lead to increased isolation or eating disorders. There is a growing need for a re-evaluation of how good health is measured, emphasising instead the quality of diet, exercise, sleep quality and stress management.

SHORT TAKES



The 11-km road is expected to cost RO 6,157,608.

WORK ON AL HAZM-AL WUSHAYL ROAD BEGINS

AL RUSTAQ: The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology has begun the rehabilitation of Al Hazm-Al Wushayl road in the Wilayat of Al Rustaq, Al Batinah South Governorate, on Sunday.

The road is approximately 11 kilometres long, and the total cost is RO 6,157,608.

Eng Muhanad bin Mubarak al Araimi, the project manager at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, said that the project includes rehabilitation of the existing dual carriageway and widening the road shoulders from Al Hazm village through Al Shubaika and Al Misfah all the way to Al Wushayl village.

The road will shorten the distance and ease the traffic flow between the villages and the centre of the wilayat. The project also includes the construction of two tunnels in Al Shubaika and Al Misfah, he said.

The design and implementation period for the project is 19 months, in addition to 60 days for preparations, totalling 570 days. The road will reduce accidents at dangerous intersections in Al Shubaika and Al Misfah areas, spur economic activities and support social development, the official said. — **ONA**



PUBLIC NOTICE

Hi-Tech Inspection Services LLC, Al Rusayl, Sultanate of Oman, hereby notifies that **Mr Indrajit Gupta**, holder of **Indian Passport No. Z7871155**, employed as Division Manager for Advanced Inspection Services.

He is no longer employed with or authorized to represent Hi-Tech Inspection Services LLC in any capacity effective from 5 November 2025. The company shall not be responsible for any commitments or representations made by him after this date.

HI-TECH INSPECTION SERVICES LLC
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OMAN SHOWCASES SMART CITY VISION AT BARCELONA GLOBAL EXPO

KABEER YOUSUF
MUSCAT, NOV 10

Oman shared its expertise and forward-thinking ideas at the Smart City Expo World Congress (SCEWC), held in Barcelona, Spain, from November 4-6. The participation underscored Oman’s commitment to modernising its cities in line with Vision 2040.

Represented by Muscat Municipality, the Omani delegation was led by Ahmed bin Mohammed al Humaidi, Chairman of Muscat Municipality. The global event, recognised as the world’s leading platform for urban innovation, brought together city leaders, industry experts, and policymakers to exchange insights and explore solutions for sustainable and resilient cities.



Ahmed bin Mohammed al Humaidi

“The conference discussed innovative approaches to urban development and enhancing cities’ readiness for the future through the exchange of experiences and review of the latest global practices in smart cities,” said Al Humaidi.

Held at Fira de Barcelona, the

conference covered key themes including digital transformation, sustainable mobility, clean energy, efficient governance and urban inclusion. This year’s edition featured more than 600 speakers, 1,000 exhibitors and 25,000 professional participants from around the world.

“We were able to share knowledge and gain valuable insights and innovative concepts from the three-day event, which brought together a diverse group of executives, city planners, academics and entrepreneurs,” Al Humaidi added.

The 2025 edition will focus on Artificial Intelligence, climate adaptation, sustainable water management and urban resilience, further shaping the global conversation on smart, sustainable cities.

Innovation pact signed for persons with disabilities

THE Ministry of Social Development and the Association for Children with Disability signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC), to enhance social capital, training, scientific research, innovation, and raise awareness of issues concerning persons with disabilities.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the Ministry by Shaikh Rashid bin Ahmed al Shamsi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Social Development.

It was signed on behalf of the Association by Khadija bint Nasser al Saatiyah, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Association for Children with Disability.

The MoC aims to empower the workers in the boards of directors of civil society institutions to develop their leadership and administrative capabilities, and to increase the participation of person with disabilities in leadership and economic empowerment programmes, thereby contributing to enhancing their effective role in society.

The memorandum also seeks to support scientific research and



Khadija bint Nasser al Saatiyah and Shaikh Rashid bin Ahmed al Shamsi signed the agreement. — **ONA**

studies related to disability issues, and to organise joint events, including conferences, seminars and workshops, that contribute to raising community awareness of persons with disabilities issues and promoting a culture of inclusion and comprehensive community participation.

The signing comes within the framework of the Ministry of Social Development’s efforts to strengthen partnership with civil society institutions, support social capital, and build effective partnerships that contribute to empowering persons with disabilities and integrating them into various aspects of life. — **ONA**



العمانية للاستثمارات التعليمية والتدريبية
oman education & training investments

Notice and Invitation to Attend the Annual General Meeting

The Board of Directors of OMAN EDUCATION & TRAINING INVESTMENT CO SAOG (the “Company”) has the pleasure to invite the shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting, which will be held on Tuesday at 03:00 PM on 25/11/2025, via the electronic platform which can be accessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository Company (www.mcd.om). If the quorum requirement for holding the Annual General Meeting is not fulfilled, a second Annual General Meeting shall be held on Monday at 03:00 PM on 01/12/2025, via the electronic platform which can be accessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository Company (www.mcd.om) to discuss the following agenda:

Annual Ordinary General Meeting Agendas:

- To consider and approve the Board of Director’s Report for the financial year ended 31/08/2025
- To consider and approve the Corporate Governance Report for the financial year ended 31/08/2025.
- To consider the Auditor’s Report and to approve the Financial Statements (Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account) of the Company for the financial year ended 31/08/2025.
- To consider and approve the proposed cash dividend to the shareholders, as on the date of the meeting, amounting to 100 baisa for each share for the financial year ended 31/08/2025
- To ratify the sitting fees paid to the board of directors and its subcommittees during financial year ended 31/08/2025, and determine the sitting fees for the financial year 2026 as recorded in annexure
- To consider and approve the proposal of distributing the total sum of RO 300,000 as remuneration for the Board of Directors of the Company for the year ended 31/08/2025.
- To consider the amounts allocated and spent for the company’s social responsibilities for the year ended on 31/08/2025- (as per the Annexure).
- To discuss and approve the proposed allocation of RO 90,000 to fulfill the Company’s Corporate Social responsibilities for the year ending on 31/08/2026.
- To appoint the auditors for the financial year ending 31/08/2026-- and approve their fees
- To elect a new Board of Directors for the Company from amongst Shareholders or no shareholders. Any person who wishes to be nominated to the Board of Directors of the Company is required to fill in a Director’s Nomination Form. Such a form can be obtained from the Company. The completed Form should be delivered to the Company at least five (5) days prior to the date of the Annual Ordinary General Meeting of the Company (no later than the end of the business hours on Tuesday, 18 November 2025). The candidate must satisfy the company’s board membership requirements.

According to the Company’s Articles of Association and the controls for holding General Meetings using modern technology issued by the capital market authority, we would like to draw your attention to the following:

- Legal person, exclusively, has the right to delegate a natural person to attend the General Meeting and vote on its behalf through technical means, provided that this natural person has an investor number in MCDG.
- Voting on any of the agenda items begins no more than three days before the date of the General Meeting until the voting process ends on the day of the General Meeting. If the shareholder’s shares are increased or decreased, the voting process will be canceled, and the shareholder will have to vote again on the day of the General Meeting.

Chairman
Hassan bin Ihsan bin Nasseb Al-Nasseb

Legal Advisor
Omani Educational and Training Investments Company / Legal advisor

External Auditor
Crowe Mak Ghazali LLC

48 students take part in geological contest

NIZWA: The Geological Society of Oman organised the 10th edition of the Geological Challenger Competition in Wadi Al Muaydin, Wilayat of Nizwa, with the participation of 48 male and female students specialising in Earth Sciences and Oil and Gas Engineering from various Omani universities and colleges. The competition forms part of the society’s continuous efforts to promote geological awareness and enhance field-based skills among students in disciplines linked to the energy sector. It aims to prepare qualified national cadres capable of applying knowledge in real geological environments and contributing effectively to exploration and energy development.

The challenger serves as a field simulation of real-world oil and gas operations. — **ONA**



وزارة التراث والسياحة
Ministry of Heritage and Tourism

Announcement of Internal Tenders

Tender No.	161/2025/MHT/HQ-36	162/2025/MHT/HQ-37	163/2025/MHT/HQ-38	Tender Name
				Consultancy Services for Preparation Detailed Engineering Design for a Mountain Bike Park Adventure Project in Wilayat Al Jabal Al Akhdhar.
				Consultancy Services for Digital Documentation, Engineering Drawing Lifting and Architectural Planning of the Oasis Wall of the Bahla Fort Archaeological Site.
				Maintenance and Restoration Work on the Al-Hamra Heritage House.
Fees of Tender Documents (Non-refundable)	161/2025/MHT/HQ-36	162/2025/MHT/HQ-37	163/2025/MHT/HQ-38	62.500 R.O 25 R.O 25 R.O
Tender Document Sales End Date	30/11/2025			
Last Date for Bid Submission	22/12/2025			
Grade	161/2025/MHT/HQ-36	162/2025/MHT/HQ-37	163/2025/MHT/HQ-38	First - Second Third Fourth
E-Tendering Portal	https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om			

- Interested Companies registered with Tender Board (in the mentioned Grade) may obtain Tender documents from the E. Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>, against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of documents.
- The Tenderers must acknowledge commitment to the bid.
- All companies submitting bids for this tender are required to attach a valid and recently issued Omanization Compliance Certificate from the Ministry of Labour, provided that the certificate is not older than 30 days from the date of issuance.
- This certificate is considered a mandatory document, and failure to submit it — for any reason — shall result in the outright disqualification of the bid, without being evaluated technically or financially.
- The certificate must also demonstrate the company’s compliance with the Omanization percentage required by the Ministry of Labour. If the required percentage is not met, the bid shall be automatically disqualified.
- The Ministry shall not be obligated to accept the lowest or any other bids
- The bid submission period starts after the end of the inquiry period shown in the e-tendering system, until the last date for submitting bids before (10:00 am, Oman time).

Support and inquiries

For more information, related to the tender, kindly communicate through the website of the e-tendering system: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>

For inquiries related to the technical support for the e-tendering system, kindly communicate through etenderhd@ptlc.gov.om or 24402200

For further information

Email : solic@mht.gov.om
Phones : 22088348 - 22088085

WORLD

SHORT TAKES



Old landmines recovered from the disputed areas, in the border province of Surin. — AFP file photo

THAILAND SUSPENDS CAMBODIA DEAL OVER LANDMINES

BANGKOK: Thailand announced it was suspending the implementation of a peace agreement with neighbouring Cambodia after a landmine blast injured two Thai soldiers near the border. The deal was meant to secure a lasting end to hostilities following border clashes in July that killed at least 43 people and displaced more than 300,000 civilians on both sides.

The Royal Thai Army said in a statement that the mine explosion in Sisaket province left one soldier with a severe leg injury, while pressure from the blast caused another to experience chest pains. Thai government spokesman Siripong Angkasakulkiat said Bangkok would cease “the follow-up to the joint declaration”, meaning the accord with Cambodia inked in Kuala Lumpur in late October.

The next steps planned as part of the agreement’s implementation included the release of 18 Cambodian soldiers detained in Thailand. Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul told a news conference that “we thought that the security threat had eased, but it has not actually decreased”. Cambodia’s defence ministry pledged in a statement on Monday an “unwavering commitment” to peace. — AFP

EGYPT BEGINS PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS



People queue to vote at a school, during the first round of Egypt’s elections in Giza. — Reuters

CAIRO: Egyptians head to the polls on Monday to elect a new parliament. The opening of polling stations at 9:00 am marks the start of a weeks-long process to fill 568 of the 596 seats in the lower house, with some provinces not voting for another two weeks. The remaining 28 lawmakers will be appointed directly by Sisi.

Egyptians abroad cast their ballots on Friday and Saturday. In regions such as Alexandria, voters have until Tuesday to cast their ballots in the first round. Some regions including Cairo will not vote until November 24. Final results are expected by December 25. Half of the seats will be filled through closed party lists and the other half by individual candidates, with a quarter of the seats reserved for women. The parliamentary vote comes more than two months after elections for the senate, the upper chamber, which saw a low turnout of about 17 per cent. The pro-government “National List for Egypt” coalition swept that vote, running unopposed in the party list race. The coalition is expected to dominate again. — AFP

SOUTH KOREA INDICTS EX-PRESIDENT YOON FOR AIDING ENEMY

SEOUL: South Korean prosecutors indicted former president Yoon Suk Yeol on Monday on new charges of aiding the enemy, alleging that he ordered drone flights over North Korea to strengthen his effort to declare martial law. North Korea said last year it had “proved” that the South flew drones to drop propaganda leaflets over its capital Pyongyang, an act that Seoul’s military has not confirmed.

State prosecutors opened a special investigation this year to examine whether sending the drones was an illegal attempt by Yoon to provoke

the North and use its reaction as a pretext for declaring military rule. Prosecutor Park Ji-young told reporters on Monday that the special counsel team had “filed charges of benefiting the enemy in general and of abuse of power” against the former president.

Yoon and others “conspired to create conditions that would allow the declaration of emergency martial law, thereby increasing the risk of inter-Korean armed confrontation and harming public military interests,” said Park. She added that compelling evidence had

been found in a memo written by Yoon’s former counter-intelligence commander in October last year, which pushed to “create an unstable situation or seize an arising opportunity”.

The memo said the military should target places “that must make them (the North) lose face so that a response is inevitable, such as Pyongyang” or the major coastal city of Wonsan. Seoul and Pyongyang have remained technically at war since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in an armistice, not a peace treaty. — AFP

World media association denounces Israeli attacks

AN ORGANISATION representing international media in Israel and the Palestinian territories on Monday condemned attacks by Israeli settlers on journalists in the occupied West Bank, urging Israeli authorities to halt the “violence immediately”. The Foreign Press Association (FPA), which represents hundreds of foreign journalists, said it was “appalled” by the recent attacks, especially during this year’s olive harvest. “Journalists, both local and foreign, have proven to be a clear target as they document an unprecedented level of unchecked violence against Palestinians during this year’s olive harvest,” the association said, citing two incidents involving journalists from international media outlets.

The FPA said that on Saturday two employees of Reuters wearing clearly marked press vests and helmets were assaulted by masked Israeli civilians armed with clubs and rocks near the Palestinian village of Beita. “A mob of dozens of settlers beat one of the employees, a female reporter, while she was already on the ground, resulting in severe injuries,” the FPA said. “They also attacked those who tried to help her. A Reuters security person was hit, and two Palestinian freelance journalists were injured while being chased.”

On October 10, settlers beat a veteran AFP photographer with sticks when filming the olive harvest in the same area. His car, along with a handful of others



Palestinian photographer Raneen Sawafta reacts at Rafidia Hospital in Nablus in the West Bank. — AFP

“Israeli forces routinely harass and intimidate journalists, in some cases detaining them and threatening them with deportation. This is all part of a deepening climate of hostility toward the media by Israeli authorities

FEDERAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

parked at a safe distance from the field, was stoned and then set on fire by the assailants. “The photographer, who testified it was one of the worst attacks in his 30-year career, reported that Israeli forces at the scene refused to intervene, instead firing rubber bullets and tear gas at olive pickers and activists accompanying them,” the FPA said.

Several such incidents have occurred in the last few weeks, the FPA added. “Israeli forces routinely harass and intimidate journalists, in some cases detaining them and threatening them with deportation,” the FPA said.

“This is all part of a deepening climate of hostility toward the media by Israeli authorities,” it added, urging the authorities to investigate the incidents and hold

the perpetrators accountable. “In particular, we urge central command head Major General Avi Bluth and police commander Moshe Pinchi to uphold their duties to ensure that journalists can work freely and safely,” the association said. “There cannot be press freedom in an environment in which journalists are threatened and harmed with complete impunity.”

Israel has occupied the West Bank since 1967, and Israeli settlements there are expanding. Some 500,000 Israeli settlers live in the Palestinian territory and some of them have also attacked farmers trying to access their olive trees almost every day this year since the season began in mid-October, according to the Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority. — AFP



TYPHOON FUNG-WONG FLOODS PHILIPPINE TOWNS

MANILA: Entire villages lay submerged and scores of towns remained without electricity on Monday as Typhoon Fung-wong left the Philippines after killing at least five people and displacing more than a million. Fung-wong, with a footprint that spanned nearly the entire archipelago, slammed into the eastern seaboard as a “super typhoon” on Sunday evening, uprooting trees and swamping towns in its path. It landed days after Typhoon Kalmaegi swept through the islands of the central Philippines, killing at least 224 people.

Cleanup efforts were underway on Monday from Cagayan province in the far north to hard-hit Catanduanes island more than 1,000 kilometres to the south. In Cagayan, provincial rescue chief Rueli Rapsing said that a flash flood in neighbouring Apayao province had caused the Chico River to burst its banks, sending nearby residents scrambling for higher ground. — AFP

SEARCH, RESCUE OPERATIONS

Malaysia migrant shipwreck rises to 13



Authorities in Malaysia and Thailand have recovered at least 13 bodies as they search for survivors after a boat carrying undocumented migrants capsized. “Thai authorities are also conducting operations, where they have found six bodies,” Romli told a news conference. “We expect to find more victims today,” he said, with currents expected to carry more victims into Malaysian waters. Journalists in Langkawi saw at least two more bodies being brought ashore. — AFP

RESTORING ORDER

Nepal arrests more than 400 over protests



Nepal’s police have arrested 423 people accused of crimes ranging from murder to vandalism during a deadly mass uprising in September that toppled the government. Suspects also face charges that include the illegal possession and use of weapons, as well as theft and indecent behaviour, the data showed. “A team is looking into the incidents, and we are working to collect information,” Nepal police spokesman Abi Narayan Kafle said. — AFP

BRUTAL ATTACKS

Israel carries strike in south Lebanon



An Israeli strike on a main highway in southern Lebanon killed one person, the Lebanese health ministry said. Over the weekend, strikes killed five other people. “An Israeli strike on a car in the area of Baissariyeh killed one person,” the health ministry said. A journalist saw a bombed-out car on the road linking the cities of Sidon and Tyre, with traffic piling up as rescuers worked to retrieve the remains. — AFP

PENDINGAPPEAL



French police officers gather in front of the entrance of the Sante prison in Paris. — AFP

FRENCH COURT FREES EX-PRESIDENT SARKOZY FROM JAIL

PARIS: Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy on Monday was set to be freed from prison as a judge ordered his release from jail pending an appeal hearing over Libyan funding. During the examination of Sarkozy’s request in court earlier on Monday, prosecutors had requested Sarkozy, 70, be freed after 20 days in jail that the former president called a “nightmare”.

A lower court in September found the right-wing politician — who was head of state from 2007 to 2012 — guilty of seeking to acquire funding from Muammar Gaddafi’s Libya for the campaign that saw him elected and sentenced him to five years behind bars.

He entered jail on October 21, becoming the first former head of a European Union state to be incarcerated and his lawyers swiftly sought his release. The appeal hearing is due to take place in March.

During the court hearing earlier on Monday, the former leader appeared via video call from prison, wearing a dark blue jacket and flanked by lawyers, saying being incarcerated was “gruelling”. “It’s hard, very hard, certainly for any prisoner. I would even say it’s gruelling”, he said. He thanked the prison staff, who he said “showed exceptional humanity and made this nightmare — because it is a nightmare — bearable”.

Prosecutor Damien Brunet asked that Sarkozy’s request for release be granted. “The risks of collusion and pressure on witnesses justify the request for release under judicial supervision”, he said. In the courtroom showing their support were his wife, the singer and model Carla Bruni-Sarkozy and two of the former president’s sons.

The lower court in late September ordered Sarkozy to go to jail, even if he appealed, due to the “exceptional gravity” of the conviction.

But the appeals case means that Sarkozy is now presumed innocent again and the court therefore evaluated his need for pre-trial detention. Under French law, he can only be kept behind bars if no other way can be found to safeguard evidence, prevent witness tampering, stop him from escaping or reoffending, or to protect him.

In La Sante prison, the former president was separated from the general population with two bodyguards occupying a neighbouring cell to ensure his safety.

Prison wardens have said the move is an insult to their profession, but Interior Minister Laurent Nunez has said it is necessary in view of his “status” and “the threats against him”. — AFP

UKRAINE ANTI-GRAFT AGENCY RAIDS ENERGY SECTOR AS STANDOFF ESCALATES

KYIV: Ukraine’s anti-corruption agency said it was conducting large-scale raids targeting the country’s energy sector — an operation that comes after months of infighting over Kyiv’s anti-graft efforts. The National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU) said the operation — carried out in collaboration with the Specialised Anti-Corruption Prosecutor’s Office — was designed “to expose corruption” in the key sector.

President Volodymyr Zelensky

had tried this summer to strip powers from both agencies via a law removing their independence — a move that triggered rare public backlash and the largest protests since the start of the Russian attack in February 2022. Ukraine has long been plagued by corruption — which has been the focus of public protests throughout its 30-year independence. Reforms were introduced after the revolution of 2014 but there are fears that Zelensky’s abortive bid this summer

to change the law governing the anti-graft agencies could undermine Ukraine’s ambitions to join the European Union.

The president’s office said in the summer the law aimed to improve the functioning of the two bodies NABU said a “high-level criminal organisation” had “established a large-scale corruption scheme to influence strategic enterprises in the state sector”, including major nuclear power provider Energoatom. — AFP

US senators take major steps ending shutdown

THE US Senate took a major step toward ending the longest government shutdown in American history when it cleared the way for a formal debate on a motion to resume funding to federal agencies. The development represents significant progress toward ending a government shutdown that has dragged on for over 40 days, halted funding to federal programmes and disrupted air travel and other essential industries.

The breakthrough late on Sunday came after Republican and Democratic lawmakers reached a stopgap agreement to fund the government through January, after wrangling over healthcare subsidies, food benefits and Trump’s firings of federal employees.

Following the deal the Republican-led chamber approved a procedural vote by 60 votes to 40, putting a hard limit on how much longer senators can discuss the legislative measure. It gave lawmakers a maximum of 30 more hours to conduct debate before voting on the motion, which will only need 50 votes to pass. It will still need approval from the Republican-controlled House of Representatives before it lands on President Donald Trump’s desk — a process which could take days.

As the news emerged, Trump told reporters when he arrived at the White House after a weekend at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida: “It looks like we’re getting very close to the shutdown ending.” Democratic Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia was among the eight who joined Republicans to support the measure, saying: “I need a moratorium on the punishing of the federal workforce.” Virginia is home to 300,000 federal workers, and the deal would restore all furloughed employees and reverse reductions-in-force layoffs by the Trump administration.

The bill to keep the government funded at pre-shutdown levels “will protect federal workers from baseless firings, reinstate those who have been wrongfully terminated during the shutdown, and ensure federal workers receive back pay” as required by law, Kaine added. Fellow Democrat Chuck Schumer could not be persuaded



The US Capitol on the 40th day of the partial government shutdown, in Washington, DC. — Reuters

and voted against the measure, saying that “Republicans have spent the past 10 months dismantling the healthcare system, skyrocketing costs, and making everyday harder for American families.”

But Republican Senator John Thune celebrated the win, and what it could mean for Americans facing intense financial strain. “After 40 days of uncertainty, I’m profoundly glad to be able to announce that nutrition programmes, our veterans, and other critical priorities will have their full-year funding,” Thune said. Stock markets rallied on Monday on hopes the shutdown could be nearing an end, with Tokyo and Hong Kong up more than one per cent and European bourses higher in early trade.

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said that if the shutdown continued, the number of flights being cut would multiply

— even as Americans gear up to travel for the Thanksgiving holiday later this month. Duffy warned that US air travel could soon “slow to a trickle,” as thousands more flights were cancelled or delayed over the weekend. The number of cancellations both within the United States as well as to and from the country had surpassed 3,000, with more than 10,000 delays, by Sunday evening, according to data from tracking platform FlightAware.

Without a deal, Duffy warned that many Americans planning to travel for the November 27 Thanksgiving holiday are “not going to be able to get on an airplane, because there are not going to be that many flights that fly if this thing doesn’t open back up.” It could take days for flight schedules to recover after the shutdown finally ends and federal funding, including salaries, starts to flow again. — AFP

BBC apologises over Trump speech row after two chiefs resign

LONDON: The BBC apologised on Monday for editing a speech that gave the impression US President Donald Trump made “a direct call for violent action” just before the 2021 US Capitol assault, calling it “an error of judgement”. A growing furore around the issue prompted the dramatic resignations on Sunday of two of the broadcaster’s top brass and celebrations — as well as a rebuke — from the White House. It has also reopened debate in the UK over the BBC, cherished by many but which has faced long-standing accusations of institutional bias, regularly from those on the political right and, more recently, from those on the left as well.

In a letter to MPs on Monday, BBC chairman Samir Shah said it accepted that the way Trump’s speech was edited in a flagship documentary “did give the impression of a direct call for violent action”. “The BBC would

like to apologise for that error of judgement,” he added, vowing to reform oversight at the publicly funded broadcaster, among other things. It came hours after director general Tim Davie and BBC News CEO Deborah Turness resigned amid the escalating backlash over the issue.

Trump promptly celebrated, accusing BBC journalists of being “corrupt” and “dishonest”. His press secretary called the broadcaster “100 per cent fake news”. But Prime Minister Keir Starmer’s spokesman pushed back on Monday. “The BBC has a vital role in an age of disinformation,” he said, although he stressed: “It’s important that the BBC acts swiftly to maintain trust and correct mistakes quickly when they occur.”

The row comes as the government prepares to begin a politically sensitive review of the BBC’s charter, which outlines the corporation’s



People walk outside BBC Broadcasting House, in London. — Reuters

governance and funding framework. The current charter ends in 2027. The broadcaster, which has faced a prolonged period of stretched finances and cut hundreds of jobs in recent years, is funded by a licence fee paid by anyone who watches live TV in the UK.

Former Conservative prime minister Boris Johnson had threatened to stop paying his licence fee, while current Tory party leader Kemi Badenoch welcomed the resignations following a “catalogue of serious failures”. But Ed Davey, leader of the centrist Liberal Democrats, urged Starmer to tell Trump to “keep his hands off” the BBC. “It’s easy to see why Trump wants to destroy the world’s number one news source,” he said. “We can’t let him.”

The crisis grew after the right-wing Daily Telegraph newspaper reported last week that impartiality concerns were raised in an internal

memo by Michael Prescott, a former external standards adviser. Among them was criticism over clips spliced together from sections of Trump’s speech on January 6, 2021, when he was accused of fomenting the mob attack on the US Capitol following the 2020 US presidential election. The edit made it appear that Trump had told supporters he was going to walk to the US Capitol with them and “fight like hell”.

In the undoctored clip, however, the president urged the audience in the intervening period to walk with him and added: “And we’re going to cheer on our brave senators and congressmen and women.” The BBC apologised for “serious flaws” in the making of another documentary, about Gaza, which the UK’s media watchdog deemed “materially misleading”. It faced criticism for failing to pull a livestream of punk-rap duo Bob Vylan during Glastonbury festival. — AFP

OPINION

Resilience paves the way for a digital future



AS the calendar year draws to a close, this is a moment for reflection before charting the course ahead. It is time to highlight how Oman navigates global challenges.

History serves as the most reliable judge, confirming that this uniquely Omani style has allowed the country not just to survive but to emerge strong from the past two decades' most acute crises: the 2008 global financial meltdown, the protracted 2014-2019 energy price crash, and the comprehensive 2020-2022 pandemic shutdown.

The economic indicators for 2024 confirm that this deliberate approach is paying dividends. Economic activity has remained resilient, bolstered by robust growth in non-hydrocarbon activities and the steady execution of major development projects.

Crucially, inflation has remained low, offering a valuable buffer to citizens and businesses alike. The nation's fiscal health has been significantly restored, recording healthy surpluses in both fiscal and external balances, while public debt has declined markedly.

The cornerstone of this success is the government's unwavering commitment to economic diversification. The Omani economy recorded nominal growth of 0.9 per cent in 2024, a vital recovery from the 3.3 per cent contraction experienced in 2023. This

rebound was almost entirely propelled by the non-hydrocarbon sector, which expanded by a strong 3.3 per cent. This growth, driven by a 4.4-per cent increase in industrial output and a 2.5-per cent rise in the services sector, has fundamentally reshaped the nation's economic identity.

For the first time, the share of the non-hydrocarbon sector in nominal GDP has climbed to an impressive 68.2 per cent, a profound testament to the broad-based efforts to reduce reliance on the contracting hydrocarbon sector.

Looking forward, the vision is clear: the future is digital. Oman is intensifying its efforts to build a vibrant digital economy through its National Digital Economy Programme, aiming to raise the sector's contribution to 10 per cent of GDP by 2040. The initial target of contributing around 3 per cent to GDP by the end of 2025 is firmly within reach, built upon remarkable global progress. Oman is already a global standout, ranking 1st in cybersecurity readiness, 41st in e-government development and 45th in AI readiness. This foundation is solid.

Equally critical is the investment in Omanis. Equipping the workforce with skills in information technology, transformative technologies and digitalisation is central to preparing for a rapidly changing economy. The success of Omanisation policies is

Oman has not pursued breakneck speed but has instead focused on building deep, sustainable roots in its non-oil sectors and digital readiness.

evident, with employment among Omanis rising by 10.6 per cent in 2024, supported by a 4.0-per cent increase in the public sector, while expatriate employment saw corresponding declines.

Beyond the macroeconomic figures, the state's commitment to social welfare has not wavered. The health system is poised for further development, with a specific focus on epidemic and pandemic preparedness and digital transformation. Social protection has expanded to cover all categories of employment contracts, including the mandatory registration for self-employed workers. The Iskan initiative stands as a major achievement, facilitating financing for over 61,000 families and dramatically reducing waiting periods to under six months.

In conclusion, as we reflect on the past year, the narrative is one of prudent management and strategic execution.

Oman has not pursued breakneck speed but has instead focused on building deep, sustainable roots in its non-oil sectors and digital readiness. The economy remains on a solid footing, equipped not just to navigate global uncertainties but to actively seize the opportunities of the digital era. The foundation has been set; the next chapter of diversified, technology-driven growth is ready to be written.

AFTER SIX MONTHS, GERMAN'S MERZ FACES RISING WOES

CÉLINE LE PRIOUX

After just six months in power, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz's coalition is facing infighting, policy deadlock and sliding poll ratings, undermining its efforts to take on the rising far right.

It marks a difficult start for the conservative politician who ran on bold pledges of reviving the stagnant economy, overhauling the threadbare military and toughening immigration policy after years of drift under the previous government.

In German post-war politics, "there has never been such widespread dissatisfaction with a government in such a short period of time", Manfred Guellner, director of the Forsa polling institute, said. For Germans who hoped for more decisive leadership after the last government's collapse, "their expectations have been dashed", he said. The winners of February's general election, Merz's centre-right CDU/CSU bloc now find themselves neck-and-neck in the polls with the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), which came second in the poll and is now the largest opposition party. Merz's junior coalition partners, the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD) of ex-chancellor Olaf Scholz, have seen their popularity slide further after a terrible election performance, and now sit around 13-15 per cent in polls.

"It is clear that many citizens are dissatisfied or disappointed with the government's work so far," Roderich Kiesewetter, an MP from Merz's Christian Democrats (CDU), said.

The government appeared to be "focusing only on migration instead of the economy, education and security", he said. There have been increasing tensions between the ruling parties in Berlin since Merz failed to be elected chancellor in the first round of voting in parliament in early May, a first in post-war Germany.

In July, they were unable to agree on the appointment of three judges to the constitutional court, with the conservatives considering the Social Democrats' candidate too left-wing.

A group of young conservative MPs revolted over a pension reform proposal, which had already been adopted by the cabinet, arguing that it burdened future generations.

Meanwhile, an overhaul of the country's military service system, which was supposed to demonstrate Germany's leadership in Nato in the face of the Russian threat, has turned into a stalemate over whether to bring back a limited form of conscription. — AFP

Law brings new dawn for disability rights in Oman

FOR decades, I have lived and worked at the intersection of disability, academia and social action in Oman. My journey began long before the topic became part of public discourse — when disability was largely framed in terms of charity, care and rehabilitation.

I have witnessed how individuals with disabilities, despite their resilience, were often positioned as recipients of welfare rather than as citizens with rights. That is why the new "Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law" (Royal Decree No 92/2025) feels deeply personal — not just as a legal reform, but as the realisation of a long-awaited social and moral transformation in Oman.

The new law marks a historic shift from the earlier 2008 "Welfare and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities Law", which, while progressive for its time, reflected a limited understanding of disability. The previous law viewed disability through a medical and charitable lens — focusing on care, rehabilitation and specific programmes to "manage" or "alleviate" disability. Its spirit was compassionate but paternalistic. It offered help, but not equality. It gave support, but not agency.

By contrast, the 2025 law redefines disability as a matter of human rights. It replaces the outdated welfare-based model with a rights-based approach, ensuring that persons with disabilities are recognised as full and equal citizens. This transformation — from welfare to rights — is not a mere change in language; it is a shift in national consciousness. Under the new legislation, disability is no longer confined to the domains of social welfare or rehabilitation centres. It now encompasses education, employment, healthcare, transport,



DR NAJMA AL ZIDJALY

The writer is Associate Professor, Sultan Qaboos University



The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law (2025) does not simply replace an old law; it replaces an old mindset. It asserts that persons with disabilities are not to be pitied or "helped" into society — they are already an integral part of it. And that, more than anything, is what true progress looks like.

civic participation and access to public spaces. It acknowledges that barriers to inclusion are not only physical but also social and attitudinal. The law mandates non-discrimination, equal opportunity and accessibility, aligning Oman with global frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which Oman ratified in 2008.

As someone who has spent years documenting and analysing disability discourse in Oman, I see this law as the culmination of many quiet struggles — the advocacy of families, the persistence of persons with disabilities themselves and the gradual evolution of Omani society towards inclusivity. For years, scholars and activists alike have called for a holistic understanding of disability — one that recognises

ability, potential and contribution rather than limitation. This law finally institutionalises that vision.

But this is only the beginning. A law, no matter how comprehensive, is merely the first step. Its power lies in its implementation — in whether schools truly become inclusive, whether workplaces adapt, whether digital and physical infrastructures become accessible, and whether society at large internalises the idea that disability is part of human diversity, not an exception to it.

As an academic, I see an urgent need for research, policy evaluation and community engagement to ensure that the law's promises translate into lived realities. As a person invested in helping the disabled community, I see the importance of awareness campaigns and collaborations between government bodies, people with disabilities, educational institutions and civil society. And as a citizen, I feel immense pride that Oman has reached this pivotal moment — one that reflects the wisdom of our leadership and the growing maturity of our society.

When I look back at my work — from studying how technology empowers individuals with disabilities, to documenting how they represent themselves in digital spaces, to advocating for full inclusivity — I realise that every step, every conversation and every publication has contributed to a collective movement leading to this day.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law (2025) does not simply replace an old law; it replaces an old mindset. It asserts that persons with disabilities are not to be pitied or "helped" into society — they are already an integral part of it. And that, more than anything, is what true progress looks like.

Let our will be to protect others’ rights



LAKSHMI KOTHANETH

The writer is a senior editor of Observer

A job to make one’s dreams come true - there must be millions visualising it at this very moment.

Why would people want to travel to another country?

To be in a foreign land takes strength and resilience because they are far from everything they are used to. But throughout history, people have travelled all over the world looking for better opportunities to make their lives and their family members’ lives better. Going to other countries to make better lives is a sacrifice people make and have made over the years. It is all fine until then, but what happens when people are promised a wonderful future, but it is all false, only to be realised once the individual steps into the land?

The dreams come to a crash landing. Panic is what is seen while looking for a solution to build hope again, and if not an ideal job, then at least to go back home. But survival becomes the mode of operation.

Such a situation becomes human trafficking. So what is human trafficking?

This is how the United Nations’ Office on Drugs and Crime defines it - “Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of people through force, fraud, or deception, with the aim of exploiting them for profit. Men, women, and children of all ages and from all backgrounds can become victims of this crime, which occurs in every region of the world. The traffickers often use violence or fraudulent employment agencies and fake

promises of education and job opportunities to trick and coerce their victims.”

Many become part of the problem without knowing the actual situation. Sometimes the employment agencies promise manpower, and in return, they have brought in people who were promised other types of professional jobs. Recruitment has become a mystery. The employers pay for the recruitment of their new staff only to find out that this job is not what the potential employees were seeking. Before one realises, the situation becomes messy.

According to the United Nations, a critical issue highlighted in the recent report on human trafficking worldwide is the shift in the nature of trafficking. “Between 2019 and 2022, trafficking for forced labour surged by 47 per cent, surpassing trafficking for inappropriate exploitation as the leading form of trafficking. Despite this shift, the criminal justice response remains slow, with convictions for forced labour still lagging behind those for inappropriate exploitation. Women and girls continue to make up the majority of trafficking victims at 61 per cent.”

In fact, cases saw an increase after Covid-19. According to the UNODC (2020) estimates, about 67 per cent of people investigated or arrested for trafficking are men, and 33 per cent are women, while 46 per cent of trafficking victims are women, 34 per cent are children, and 20 per cent are men.

For the last three months, the Sultanate of Oman has launched a campaign aimed at raising public awareness on the dangers

One has to be aware to notice a crime is being conducted and to protect oneself from being a victim or from being part of a crime knowingly or unknowingly. Each individual has a commitment to protect human rights and safeguard human dignity

of human trafficking, promoting a culture of prevention, supporting and empowering victims, and strengthening institutional cooperation both locally and internationally in confronting this crime.

The campaign is titled “Aman,” which means “safety,”and was launched by the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking (NCCHT).

The objective is clear, and that is to promote a culture of crime prevention and support for crime victims as part of relevant local and international institutional cooperation. Each individual has a commitment to protect human rights and safeguard human dignity.

The campaign is aligned with the Oman Vision 2040, which focuses on consolidating the values of justice and fairness, upgrading the system of social protection, and fostering the rule of law.

The “Aman” campaign is a national effort in the Sultanate of Oman to combat human trafficking. When the campaign was launched to mark the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, which falls on July 30 each year, Dr Ahmed Talib al Jabri, Assistant Attorney General and Deputy Chairman of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, said that the launch of “Aman” caps up the Sultanate of Oman’s stance in the face of human trafficking and the slogan of the campaign embodies a sincere call to every human being and expresses the Sultanate of Oman’s commitment in line with international standards.

TEN YEARS ON, FRANCE BEARS SCARS OF NOVEMBER 13 ATTACKS

ELISSA DARWISH

Sebastien Lascoux was absorbed in the music when three militants burst into the Bataclan concert hall in Paris and opened fire on the crowd, killing 90 people including one of his friends.

A decade on, he is still haunted by everything he saw and heard that night of November 13, 2015. He can’t go to crowded places or enclosed spaces, even cinemas. Loud noises remind him of gunshots. “I had to relearn how to interpret all the sounds around me - the noises of the street, any sudden sound that makes you jump,” he said.

The assault on the concert hall was the deadliest of a burst of coordinated attacks on the French capital that night which killed a total of 130 people and traumatised an entire nation.

Layla Gharnouti and her sister Myriam, a nurse, were at their mother’s flat about 200 metres from the Bataclan. They heard people screaming and running in the street, opened their front door and took dozens in. One of the people they rescued was Lascoux. The family turned the flat into a makeshift infirmary and treated wounds - they had no disinfectant to hand.

“The apartment smelled like blood,” said Myriam, now 46. She still lives in Paris, which she sees as a “wounded city”.

But Layla had to go. She moved to Brittany. The memories in Paris were too difficult.

“After everything that happened, the only thing I could hear was sirens, even from far away. It’s like being constantly on alert,” the 55-year-old shopkeeper said. She also has trouble going out. “In an enclosed space, I’ll look for where the emergency exits are... In a restaurant, I don’t like sitting with my back to the window. I prefer to face the window and see outside.”

Then-President François Hollande called the attacks an “act of war” and declared a nationwide state of emergency that allowed faster investigations and searches without warrants. Around 10,000 soldiers were deployed to sensitive areas including train stations and places of worship. Over time - after other attacks, including a truck rampage in 2016 in Nice and the 2020 beheading of a schoolteacher — those temporary measures got embedded into law.

“The French have internalised the idea that the threat is permanent,” Alexandre Papaemmanuel, a defence and security expert at Sciences Po Paris, said. People have got used to seeing soldiers patrolling, he added. Memories of November 13, 2015, are so persistent and vivid because it all hits so close to home, said Denis Peschanski, a historian at France’s National Centre for Scientific Research, who has studied the aftermath of the attacks.

— Reuters

Agriculture for security

EVEN though the world produces enough food to feed all of humanity, the United Nations World Food Program found that more than 295 million people faced acute hunger in 2024 – a record high. While many factors have contributed to rising food insecurity, the most important is conflict. That is especially true in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

For example, the protracted civil war in Sudan has been brutal and is getting worse, pushing parts of the country into famine. This misery, in turn, has led to a deterioration in the security situation and destabilised neighbouring countries.

Of course, hunger is far from the only driver of insecurity in Sudan and other SSA countries. But food is essential for stability, meaning that the agriculture sector can be a force for peace-building in Africa and worldwide. To that end, our organisations – CIMMYT and AGRA – have worked with African farmers to help stabilise areas beset by conflict and violent extremism.

In Sudan’s eastern Kassala state, a women-led cooperative showed how small interventions can improve community well-being. One of the cooperative’s leaders, Imtithal Atta, was able to increase her yields and earnings dramatically after learning better cultivation techniques and getting access to higher-quality seeds. Her success not only raised her self-confidence and influence, but also helped lower food prices for thousands of displaced people who had sought safety in the region.

In northern Nigeria, long plagued by terrorism, Habiba Abdulkarim and her cooperative faced many obstacles to securing land and reliable inputs. But by coming together to advocate for their needs with local leaders, the group gained access to more farmland and quality seeds. This resulted in better harvests and lower costs, encouraged other women to join forces in cooperative farming, and generated benefits for households and the wider community.

These are not isolated cases. As societies emerge from conflict, the restoration of agriculture is often an



Hunger is far from the only driver of insecurity in Sudan and other SSA countries.



ALICE RUHWEZA

The writer is President of AGRA



BRAM GOVAERTS

The writer is Director-General of CIMMYT

important sign of recovery. A steady food supply delivers tangible peace dividends: families can eat, farmers can earn, and local economies can recover. Humanitarian aid can help these communities get back on their feet, but only functioning farms and markets can restore lasting stability.

While this is food security in the traditional sense – reliable access to sufficient and safe nutrition – it also highlights how food can be a strategic commodity. In addition to sustaining households, agriculture anchors fragile states, gives legitimacy to governments, and creates an opening for cooperation in an increasingly fragmented world. Even as developing economies focus on food sovereignty, with self-sufficiency signifying geopolitical resilience, this goal does not have to be at odds with interdependence. A robust national agri-food sector can put countries in a better position to collaborate with international partners on their own terms, improving stability further.

Agriculture can also offer a platform for dialogue among geopolitical competitors. Countries that disagree on trade or borders, for example, may find common ground when it comes to controlling

crop diseases or stabilising grain supplies. Such collaboration can build confidence when negotiations on more contentious issues reach an impasse. This can be achieved through both governmental and non-governmental channels, as the global fight against wheat rust has shown: scientific institutes and governments share resistant varieties across borders, protecting harvests and fostering trust even when diplomatic relations are tense.

Climate change adds to the urgency of boosting food security. Rising temperatures, erratic rains and soil degradation have already reduced crop yields, while changing weather patterns spread pests and disease. These pressures jeopardise both food sufficiency and safety. Consider fusarium, a fungus that can cause wheat to turn pink and is toxic for humans. As the air becomes warmer and more humid, fusarium grows more easily – as is currently the case in Europe, where crops have little resistance to the fungus.

Climate-resilient agriculture – including drought-tolerant crop varieties, regenerative practices, sustainable irrigation, and integrated pest management – is now essential not just to maintain productivity, but also to prevent civil disorder stemming from soaring prices and tight supplies. Countries that cannot feed their people risk social unrest, while those that cannot work together to overcome shared agricultural problems risk regional conflict. As a result, climate-related shocks to the global food system could cause unprecedented upheaval.

For too long, agriculture has been siloed off from security and diplomatic strategy. But efforts to support and strengthen the resilience of food systems should be central to post-conflict recovery, an arena for dialogue among adversaries, and a frontline strategy in the fight against climate change. The development of local agriculture — ideally with the backing of international investment — may not resolve every conflict, but none can be resolved without it.

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SPORTS

TEEING OFF

OMAN AMONG 13 NATIONS IN ARAB GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

The Arab Golf Championship for men, presented by ANB Bank, officially began on Sunday in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, organised by the Saudi Golf Federation under the supervision of the Arab Golf Federation. The event runs from November 9 to 15, bringing together golfers from 13 Arab countries, including Oman.

This year's tournament marks the Golden Jubilee of the Arab Golf Federation 1975–2025, celebrating five decades of dedication and progress in developing the sport across the Arab world.

Representing Oman are Ahmed bin Faisal al Jahdhami, Azzan al Rumhi, Ahmed al Wahibi, Badr al Amri and Rashad al Harthy, under the guidance of coach Jonathan. The Omani team competes alongside players from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya and Morocco.

Representing Oman are Ahmed al Jahdhami, Azzan al Rumhi, Ahmed al Wahibi, Badr al Amri and Rashad al Harthy, under the guidance of coach Jonathan.

The Omani team competes alongside players from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya and Morocco.

Team captain Ahmed bin Faisal al Jahdhami expressed confidence in the squad's readiness: "We are proud to represent Oman in this milestone championship, it's an excellent opportunity to gain experience and demonstrate the steady progress of Omani golf at the Arab level."

Team-mate Azzan al Rumhi added: "Competing among the region's elite players motivates us to perform at our best and aim for top positions."

In celebration of the federation's 50th anniversary, the

championship also features a special exhibition documenting the history of Arab golf since 1975, along with the Arab Golf Federation's General Assembly meeting, during which future strategies and new board elections will take place.

The event will conclude on Saturday, November 15, with an official awards ceremony honouring the winners across all categories marking a historic milestone that bridges the legacy of the past with the aspirations of Arab golf's future.



The event runs from Nov 9 to 15, bringing together golfers from 13 Arab countries, including Oman.



Al Amerat players celebrate with the trophy alongside officials at Hockey Oman Stadium in Al Amerat. — Pics by **Abdulwahid al Hamadani**

Al Amerat retain HM Cup after shoot-out thriller

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

AL AMERAT retained their title for the second consecutive season after being crowned champions of the 55th edition of His Majesty's Hockey Cup 2025, defeating Ahli Sidab 4-2 in penalty shoot-out following a thrilling 4-4 draw in regular time.

The final took place on Monday evening at the Hockey Oman Stadium in Al Amerat, under the auspices of HH Sayyid Dr Fahd bin Al Julanda al Said, Vice-Chancellor of SQU, in the presence of several dignitaries, officials from the Oman Hockey Association, and a large crowd of enthusiastic fans.

Al Amerat began the match with clear superiority, applying high pressure on Ahli Sidab's defence. The latter adopted a cautious and organised defensive approach. From a quick counter-attack, Ahli Sidab earned a penalty corner in the seventh minute, but Pardeep Singh failed to convert. The same player later missed another clear scoring opportunity. On the other side, Al Amerat players created several dangerous chances, but goalkeeper Ibrahim al Farsi and Ahli Sidab's defence stood firm. Both sides won two penalty corners each but failed to capitalise, ending the quarter goalless.

In the second quarter, Ahli Sidab started strongly, pushing forward with intensity and missing two close chances in the fourth minute through Rashid bin Salem al Fazari and Pardeep Singh. Their persistence paid off in the 21st minute when Rashid bin Salem al Fazari scored the opening goal from a fine assist by Pardeep Singh.

Al Amerat responded immediately, earning a penalty stroke that was successfully converted by Korean player Jonghyun Jang to level the score 1-1. The momentum stayed with Al Amerat as Uttam Singh netted the second goal in the 25th minute, making it 2-1. Before the end of the quarter, Ahli Sidab missed another penalty corner (27'), followed by one

retained their title for the second consecutive season after



Al Amerat and Ahli Sidab players in action during the HM Cup final on Monday.

wasted by Al Amerat's Jang, keeping the score 2-1 in Al Amerat's favour.

Al Amerat began the third quarter energetically, earning a penalty corner which Jonghyun Jang struck before Lalit Kumar Upadhyay followed up to score the third goal in the 31st minute. Ahli Sidab fought back, and after several chances, Pardeep Singh reduced the deficit in the 39th minute following a brilliant assist from Asjit Singh. Both teams exchanged attacks afterwards, but the quarter ended 3-2 for Al Amerat.

Ahli Sidab pressed forward early in the final quarter and levelled the score 3-3 through Rashid al Fazari in the 46th minute. Moments later, Rashid received a yellow card for a rough challenge, giving Al Amerat a numerical advantage that Osama Khamis exploited to score the fourth goal in the 49th minute. In the dying seconds, Ahli Sidab earned a penalty corner, and Rashid al Fazari, who had just returned from suspension, converted to tie the game 4-4. The thrilling final went to penalties, where Al Amerat prevailed 4-2 to secure back-to-back championships.

SALALAH FINISH THIRD

Salalah claimed third place after drawing 3-3 with Sohar in regulation time, then winning 4-3 in the penalty shoot-out, taking home the bronze medals.

Following the match, HH Sayyid Dr Fahd bin Al Julanda al Said, accompanied by Basil bin Ahmed al Rawas, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for Sports and Youth, and Dr Marwan bin Juma al Juma, OHA Chairman, crowned the winners. Al Amerat Club received the championship trophy, 30 gold medals, and a cash prize of RO 40,000. Ahli Sidab received 30 silver medals and RO 25,000. Salalah earned 30 bronze medals and RO 15,000.

Among individual awards, Younis bin Ghabish al Nofali (Al Amerat) became the best player, Al Amerat's Fahad al Nofli became best goalkeeper, while Johnhyun Jang of Al Amerat claimed the top-scorer award with 13 goals and Maitham bin Saif al Wahaibi of Ahli Sidab was named as the emerging player of the tournament.

This year's edition marked a record participation of 20 clubs, the highest in the competition's history. The tournament also featured the introduction of VAR technology and international referees alongside professionally certified Omani officials, elevating the standard of organisation and officiating.

The event reaffirmed the tournament's status as a prestigious platform for Omani hockey, serving as a springboard for talent development in alignment with the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

SHORT TAKES



The festival comes as part of the ongoing partnership between the Oman School Sports Association and the Oman Chess Committee.

900 STUDENTS COMPETE AS SCHOOL CHESS FEST BEGINS

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

The Oman School Sports Association (OSSA), in collaboration with the Oman Chess Committee (OCC), has launched the School Chess Festival, bringing together more than 900 students from various governorates, including Al Dakhiliyah, Al Dhahirah, Al Wusta, Musandam, Al Sharqiyah North, Al Sharqiyah South, Al Batinah North , Dhofar and Muscat.

The festival comes as part of the ongoing partnership between the OSSA and the OCC, aiming to promote the culture of chess within Omani schools and introduce the game as an educational and recreational tool that enhances cognitive and strategic thinking among students.

Designed to provide a fun and engaging learning experience, the event features a series of interactive activities, including large scale chess models to help students visualise moves and understand the fundamentals of the game. Friendly matches and light competitions are also organised to encourage teamwork, focus and healthy competition.

In addition to the chess related events, the festival includes cultural corners that highlight Omani heritage and traditional crafts. Visitors can explore displays of traditional Omani cuisine and handcrafted products, offering students a glimpse into the richness of Oman’s cultural identity and craftsmanship.

The School Chess Festival represents one of the key programmes targeting students in the early school stages, aiming to identify and nurture young chess talents who may later represent their governorates in national and regional competitions. Through this initiative, the OSSA reaffirms its commitment to build a generation of intellectually active and culturally aware students, while strengthening the tie-up with the OCC in promoting sports that combine strategy, creativity and education across the nation’s schools.

MUSALIH CT, ISWK U19 REGISTER WINS



Aryan Alkesh Joshi of ISWK took 7 wickets.

MUSCAT: Musalih CT beat TECS by 38 runs in the B Division of the Oman Cricket League 2025-26 supported by Al Ansari Group of Companies.

Rasik Palli scored a blistering 73 of 38 balls with 8 boundaries and 4 maximums supported by skipper Jeason George who scored 29 of 28 to get Musalih CT score 190-7 in 20 overs. In reply, TECS were bundled for 152 runs courtesy of two wickets-a-piece by Jijo Jose, Manish Bhatia and Syed Arfan. **Brief scores:** Musalih CT 190-7 in 20 overs (Rasik Palli 73 (38b); Shamzan Siraj 2-22) beat TECS 152 all out in 18.5 overs (Iqran Khan 42 (25b); Jijo Jose 2-14) by 38 runs.

In the U19 50 overs league, ISWK U19 beat OCA U19 Red by 61 runs. ISWK U19 posted 198 being bundled in 41 overs courtesy Ayush Shetty scoring 57 of 105 balls. Haseeb Ahmed picked 5 wickets, while Christo Tredoux picked 3 wickets and Imranul Islam claimed 2 wickets.

In reply, Aryan Joshi, ISWK U19’s prodigy off-spinner, spun a web through the OCA U19 Red line-up to pick seven wickets in his quota of 10 overs claiming victory for his side by 61 runs. **Brief scores:** ISWK U19 198 all out in 41 overs (Ayush Shetty 57 (105b); Haseeb Ahmad 5-19) beat OCA U19 Red 137 all out in 33 overs (Gaurav Dinesh 33 (43b); Aryan Joshi 7-33) by 61 runs.



Seeb edged Ibri 3-2 in the final to win the gold. In the third-place playoff, Al Rustaq defeated Taqah 3–1 to claim the bronze medal.

Seeb grab Oman TT teams title, Ibri finish second

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

SEEB Club lifted the title of 2025 Oman Men’s Table Tennis Team Championship after a thrilling 3-2 victory over Ibri Club in the final at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher on Sunday night.

Seeb’s Korean player Minha Hawang alongside with Bilal al Rasdhi and Muhannad al Balushi powered Seeb to register a strong come back to the podium after an absence in the last season. Muhannad retained the podium spot as he represented champions Salalah in last season.

The final registered tough challenges from both teams as Ibri players including professional Chinese player Yonis Yinhang Xu, Ahmed al Riyami and Nasser al Balushi worked hard to bounce back but the final deciding half ended in favour of Seeb.

In the third-place playoff, Al Rustaq defeated Taqah 3–1 to claim the bronze medal while Taqah, who included Bahrain’s Anwar Makai, reached semifinals for the first time.

Ibri entered final after edging Al Rustaq 3-1 in semifinal while Seeb reached semifinals after their 3-1 victory over Taqah. The presence of several foreign professional

players from countries including China, South Korea and Bahrain this season added remarkable competitiveness and technical quality to the domestic championship.

The final ceremony took place in presence of Brigadier (Retd) Said bin Mohammed al Hajri, Chairman of Oman Athletics Association, in the presence of board members of Oman Table Tennis Association (OTTA), club officials, besides fans and guests.

The chief guest delivered the medals and trophies to the winning clubs and players across all categories of the 2025 domestic season. In the under-11 singles category, Mohammed bin Sami al Zaabi from Saham claimed the title, while Al Moamin al Alawi from Yanqul finished as runner-up and his team-mate Al Yazid al Alawi finished third.

In the under-15 singles, Yousuf al Riyami of Al Rustaq emerged as champion, followed by Ali al Ajmi of Saham in second and Turki al Abri of Al Rustaq in third. In the under-19 singles, Ahmed al Riyami of Ibri won the gold, with Luqman al Farsi of Ibri finishing second and Nasser al Zaabi of Saham taking third.

In the men’s singles (senior) category, Muhannad al Balushi of Seeb captured the title after a thrilling final, Ahmed al Riyami of Ibri finished as runner-up and Ghassan al Ghassani of Seeb came third.

Said al Hajri praised the OTTA for its efforts in promoting and expanding the sport across the Sultanate. “The final showcased the remarkable progress of Omani players and their technical development. I extend my congratulations to Seeb Club for their title win, and commend Ibri and Rustaq Clubs for their impressive performances. The continued growth of local talent will undoubtedly pave the way for regional and international success,” Al Hajri said.

CHAMPIONS’ REFLECTIONS

Muhannad al Balushi, who achieved a double triumph this season by winning both the men’s singles and men’s team titles, expressed his delight: “ This success is the result of continuous effort, daily training and the great support from Seeb Club’s management and coaches. It motivates me to aim higher and represent Oman strongly in international competitions, starting with the upcoming WTT Star Contender Muscat 2025.”

Meanwhile, Ahmed al Riyami of Ibri Club described the season as “exceptional,” highlighting the team’s multiple podium finishes across categories. “Winning and competing locally gives us confidence and technical maturity to challenge at regional and international levels,” he said.

Oman U17 team begins training camp in Thailand

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

The Oman under-17 football team departed on Monday evening for Thailand to begin an overseas training camp that runs until November 20, as part of their final preparations for the AFC U17 Asian Cup qualifiers. The qualifiers will be hosted by Myanmar, which will also include Syria, Nepal, Afghanistan and Oman in Group 7.

During their stay in Thailand, the junior Red Warriors will play two strong friendly matches — the first against Thailand on November 13, and the second against Kuwait on November 16. These matches will serve as ideal tests for the technical staff to assess the main squad’s readiness before their opening qualifier on November 24 against Syria.

Head coach Ahmed bin Salem Bait Said confirmed that the team aspires to deliver strong



The Oman squad participating in the Thailand camp consists of 23 players.

performances and compete for the top spot in Group 7 to secure qualification for the AFC U17 Asian Cup finals, which will be held next year in Saudi Arabia.

The Oman squad participating in the Thailand camp consists of 23 players: Goalkeepers: Salem al Rawahi, Abdullah al Zaabi, Abdullah al Balushi; Outfield players: Abdullah al Saadi,

Bashar al Shamsi, Mohammed al Jabri, Namar al Amri, Awad al Saadi, Mohammed al Balushi, Mubarak al Amri, Turki al Ghassani, Muadh al Hinaï, Bashar al Ghafri, Al Hassan Bahhaj, Saleh al Balushi, Saad al Maamari, Ahmed al Yahmadi, Mohammed al Hashem, Turki al Ruzaïqi, Al Azhar al Saadi, Mishaal al Raqqadi, Mohammed

al Uraini and Nizar al Salimi.

The U17 Asian Cup qualifiers feature seven groups hosted across several countries. Group 1 will take place in China and includes Bangladesh, Bahrain, Brunei, Timor-Leste and Sri Lanka. Group 2 will be held in Kyrgyzstan with Yemen, Laos, Cambodia, Guam and Pakistan. Vietnam will host Group 3, which includes Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Northern Mariana Islands and Macau.

Meanwhile, India will host Group 4 featuring Iran, Palestine, Lebanon and Chinese Taipei. Group 5 will be played in Jordan and includes Australia, Iraq, Philippines and Bhutan. Thailand will host Group 6 with Kuwait, Turkmenistan, Mongolia and the Maldives. The group winners from all seven groups, along with the best five second-placed teams, will qualify for the AFC U17 Asian Cup finals in Saudi Arabia in 2026.

SPORTS

14 TEAMS



The championship kicked off on Sunday in Salalah with 14 teams divided into three competitive groups.

14TH EDITION OF RCAFC KICKS OFF IN SALALAH

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

The 14th Royal Court Affairs Football Championship (RCAFC) kicked off on Sunday, November 9, in Salalah with the participation of 14 teams, divided into three competitive groups, marking the start of one of the most anticipated sporting events among the Royal Court Affairs units.

Group A features teams from the General Directorate of Human Resources, the General Directorate of Transport, Royal Establishments, Royal Hospitality and the General Directorate of Audit.

Group B includes the Royal Court Affairs Security Unit, the Royal Cavalry, the General Directorate of Veterinary Services, the Office of the Secretary General of Royal Court Affairs and the General Directorate of Supply.

Group C brings together the Royal Gardens and Farms, the Royal Farm in Razat, the General Directorate of Finance and the General Directorate of Information Technology and Communications.

This year’s championship has drawn wide interest across all participating units, reflecting the event’s significance in fostering teamwork, sportsmanship and camaraderie among staff members.

The 13th edition of the tournament, held in 2024, saw the General Directorate of Transport crowned champions for the third time, following previous victories in 2018 and 2017.

The Royal Cavalry remain the most successful team in the competition’s history with five titles 2014, 2012, 2011, 2010 and 2008, while the Royal Court Affairs Security Unit have claimed the trophy three times 2019, 2015 and 2009, The Royal Gardens and Farms team captured the title once in 2013.

Meanwhile, Muscat is gearing up to host the quarterfinal stage of the championship on Wednesday, November 12, following an intense group stage that featured 17 teams battling for qualification.

The group stage concluded with eight teams advancing to the knockout round.

From Group A, the General Directorate of Supply topped the table with 10 points from three wins and a draw, followed by the Royal Yachts team with 9 points from three wins and one defeat.

In Group B, defending champions General Directorate of Transport advanced with 7 points from two wins and one draw, joined by the Royal Court Affairs Security Unit with the same points.

From Group C, the Royal Hospitality team qualified with 7 points from two wins and a draw, alongside the Royal Cavalry, who secured 6 points from two victories and one loss.

The quarterfinal matches are expected to deliver high intensity encounters among the top teams., as they compete for a place in the championship final.



The top three teams celebrate with the officials and supporters.

Shitoryu Oman claim first in Land of Peace karate

ANUROOP ATHIPARAMBATH
@anuroop_ath

SHITORYU Oman Karate Do Kai Club emerged overall champions in the second Land of Peace Open Karate Championship 2025 at the Al Amal Sports Club Hall in Muscat recently.

Shotokan Karate Centre claimed the second spot, while Karate Champions Club took third position and Karate Champions Academy finished third after a strong competition among the 310 male and female karate athletes.

The grand event, organised by the Shotokan Karate Centre under the umbrella of the Oman Karate Committee, was held on November 7 under the auspices of Tariq bin Mohammed al Kharousi, Member of the Majlis Ash'shura representing Al Awabi.

The championship featured 310 male and female athletes competing in various age categories of kata and kumite events, representing 24 clubs, academies and karate centres from seven countries: Oman, UAE, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Sudan and Egypt. The competition was officiated by 38 international and national referees, while 25 organisers managed different committees.

The championship was sponsored by Badr Al Samaa Medical Group, Mazoon Dairy Company, City Lights Company, Talal Al Akhzami International, Shikara Martial Arts,

Orangy Juices, Distinguished Multi Business Company and Al Naabi Sweets.

The event attracted a large audience of karate enthusiasts, parents of the athletes as well as prominent social figures and media representatives.

During the closing ceremony, the chief guest honoured the referees while medals were awarded to winners in several age categories for both kata and kumite.

Some Shotokan Karate Centre coaches and athletes were also honoured, with Tariq al Kharousi presenting them with Black Belt (Dan) certificates of various degrees, in recognition of their dedication to training and commitment to developing their technical skills.

The ceremony also recognised the participating clubs alongside the organising committees.

Following that, Sensei Navas Mokeri – Chairman of Shotokan Karate Centre, Sensei Yousuf bin Musallam al Siyabi – Head Coach, Sensei Hilal bin Mohammed al Abdali – Secretary, and several members of the centre presented a commemorative shield to the chief guest, expressing their appreciation and gratitude for his continuous support.

25 YEARS OF DEDICATION

Navas Mokeri, Chairman and Founder of the Shotokan Karate Centre, said: “For the past 25 years, we have been dedicated to teaching karate and promoting discipline and respect among our students. Each year, we organise both national and

international competitions. The second Land of Peace Open karate competition was a resounding success, with all the coaches and participants extremely pleased with the outcome. The event featured 38 world-class referees, both international and national, as well as 25 dedicated organisers. The positive feedback from participants, especially those from abroad, was truly gratifying.”

Hilal bin Ali al Kindi, a member of Shotokan Karate Centre, said: “It was a wonderful event by all standards, in terms of preparation, organisation, management and execution. The championship, which saw wide participation from Oman and outside, achieved its goals. The event had a positive impact on the players and parents.”

Ashbind Peruli, an instructor at Shotokan Karate Centre, said: For over 25 years, the Shotokan Karate Centre has been proudly serving the community in Oman, promoting discipline, respect and physical fitness through karate. Each year, we organise national and international championships with the participation of 300 to 500 students from across the GCC countries.”

Amjad bin Ahmed al Zadjali, one of the parents, said: “As a father of one of the participants, I am truly proud of the remarkable efforts made by the Shotokan Karate Centre and the event management team. The tournament was organised with great professionalism and attention to detail, creating a wonderful atmosphere for the young athletes to showcase their skills.”

Nizwa, Al Amerat and Masirah win in Junior Basketball League

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

The secondary hall at Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher hosted the fifth week of the 2025-2026 Junior Basketball League, which saw Nizwa defeat Seeb 75-53, Al Amerat overcome Qurayat 74-21, while Masirah won their match against Saham (20-0) after the latter withdrew.

Nizwa continued their impressive form in the league after securing a 75-53 win over Seeb in an exciting matchup, during which both teams displayed solid performances, particularly in the second half.

Nizwa started strong, leading 20-11 after the first quarter. The team maintained its dominance in the

second quarter thanks to disciplined defence and accurate long-range shooting, finishing the first half with a comfortable 45-23 lead.

In the third quarter, Nizwa kept their strong momentum despite Seeb’s attempts to narrow the gap. Seeb applied fast offensive pressure, but Nizwa’s organised defence prevented any real comeback, ending the third quarter 58-35 in Nizwa’s favour.

In the final quarter, Seeb tried to get back into the game through counterattacks and three-point shots, yet the experience and skill of Nizwa’s players proved decisive as they maintained control until the final whistle.

Nizwa was led by Al Mulhim al Obaidani, who scored 23 points,



Al Amerat and Qurayat players in action. — Ammar al Musafir

Adam al Hinai, who added 22 points with smart movements under the rim, and Elyas al Obaidani, who netted 7 points. For Seeb, Khalid al Mughairi stood out with 15 points, followed by Danil al Balushi (10 points) and Hamed al Nadabi (8 points). The match was officiated by Taha al Amri as the first referee and Al Mahdi al Alawi as the second referee.

AL AMERAT CRUSH QURAYAT

In the second match, Al Amerat achieved a commanding 74-21 victory over Qurayat. Al Amerat players’ focus and superior skills made the difference, with Sultan al Sinani leading the scoring with 23 points, followed by Sami al Busaidy (14 points) and Mulhim al Awaisi

(8 points). Qurayat’s top scorers were Moataz al Sinani (8 points) and Mohammed al Ghazali (5 points).

Al Amerat scored 16 points in the opening quarter to Qurayat’s 9. They extended the lead in the second quarter, adding 20 points against Qurayat’s 5, ending the first half 36-14. Their dominance continued in the third quarter (19-5), pushing the score to 55-19. In the final quarter, Al Amerat added 13 points while limiting Qurayat to two, sealing a 74-21 triumph. The match was refereed by Thabit al Hinai (first referee) and Wahab al Sinani (second referee).

In the third match, Masirah was awarded a 20-0 victory following Saham’s withdrawal, in accordance with the league’s competition regulations.

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SHORTTAKES

FSA steps up investor protection amidst rising fraud risks

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

THE Financial Services Authority (FSA) has launched an 'Investor Protection Portal' on their official website, stepped up disclosure requirements and oversight of intermediaries; and secured court rulings against unauthorised operators as part of a broad push to protect investors and market integrity.



ABDULLAH BIN SALIM AL SALMI
Executive President of the FSA

According to Abdullah bin Salim al Salmi, Executive President of the FSA, the recently launched portal centralises guidance and warnings; and urges citizens and residents to verify authorisations before dealing with entities offering investment services.

Enhanced disclosure is paired with tighter supervision of brokers and asset managers; and minority-shareholder rights, voting, board representation and fair treatment, are being reinforced alongside stronger investor-relations practices at listed firms, he said in an exclusive interview.

Public awareness is a central pillar. "An informed investor is far better protected than an uninformed one", Al Salmi stressed, warning the public to treat "too-good-to-be-true" promises with caution.

Enforcement complements education. In this vein, the FSA has acted against unauthorised entities and publicised judicial decisions to deter misconduct, while aiming to keep oversight proportionate for licensed firms so they can operate efficiently and with confidence.

Significantly, the plan running 2026–2030, crafted in alignment with Oman Vision 2040, positions capital markets and insurance as trusted, reliable pillars of the financial system and commits to maintaining supervised institutions that are sound, sustainable and resilient, meeting public expectations and supporting the broader economy.

Ultimately, the approach couples clarity and deterrence: raise literacy to spot scams, enforce against bad actors; and elevate the quality and timeliness of information so markets can function transparently and fairly, he concluded.

Pact signed to build new Samayil Hospital

THE Government of the Sultanate of Oman has signed a landmark financing agreement with the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development to support the construction of the new Samayil Hospital in the Al Dakhiliyah Governorate — a key milestone in Oman's drive to enhance nationwide healthcare infrastructure.

The agreement was signed by Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance, on behalf of the Omani government and by Waleed bin Shamlan al Bahar, Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, representing the fund.

The new hospital aims to significantly strengthen healthcare services in the Wilayat of Samayil and surrounding areas, providing advanced medical care for citizens and residents alike.

The project will deliver a modern, integrated healthcare facility equipped with cutting-edge medical technologies and specialised departments to cater to diverse medical needs.

With a planned capacity of 170 beds — expandable to 300



The agreement was signed by Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance and by Waleed bin Shamlan al Bahar, Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, representing the fund.

— the hospital will be built on a total area of 250,000 square metres, with a built-up area of 65,804 square metres.

Once completed, the facility will ease the burden on referral hospitals in neighbouring governorates and ensure that residents of Al Dakhiliyah Governorate have better access to essential medical services closer to home.

This collaboration reflects Oman's commitment to advancing its healthcare infrastructure in alignment with the strategic goals of Oman Vision 2040, which emphasises the development of a world-class healthcare system.

The project also aims to foster local medical expertise by creating training and employment opportunities

for Omani professionals in the medical and nursing fields.

By strengthening healthcare capacity and promoting human capital development, the Samayil Hospital project underscores Oman's broader efforts to build a more resilient and efficient healthcare network across all governorates — ensuring equitable access to quality care for every citizen. — ONA

OMAN'S NATURAL GAS OUTPUT RISES TO 42.6 BCM

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman's total natural gas production, including domestic output and imports, grew slightly by 0.9 per cent to reach 42.6 billion cubic metres by the end of September 2025, compared to 42.2 billion cubic metres (bcm) during the same period in 2024, according to data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The increase was largely driven by a 10 per cent rise in associated gas production, which reached 9.45 billion cubic metres compared to 8.59 billion cubic metres in the previous year.

However, non-associated gas production, including imports, fell by 1.4 per cent to 33.17 billion cubic metres, down from 33.63 billion cubic metres in 2024.

In terms of utilisation, industrial projects recorded a 3.5 per cent decline in gas consumption, reaching 20.88 billion cubic metres compared to 21.63 billion cubic metres a year earlier.

On the other hand, gas used for power generation increased by 1.4 per cent to 11.77 billion cubic metres, up from 11.61 billion cubic metres in 2024. — ONA

Master-planning underway for new energy logistics project at Duqm

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, NOV 10

A MASTERPLAN for the development of new energy storage and terminal infrastructure at the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) is currently underway — part of a joint initiative by Oman Tank Terminal Company (OTTCO), a subsidiary of OQ Group, and Royal Vopak, a leading international liquids storage operator, to strengthen Duqm's positioning in global energy logistics.

According to a senior OTTCO official, the masterplan is being jointly developed by OTTCO and Vopak, which last



ALI AL MAAMARI
VP — Operations and Maintenance at OTTCO

week signed a strategic agreement to establish a new company to oversee the delivery of the initiative.

"We have already started our masterplan study", said Ali al Maamari, VP — Operations and Maintenance at OTTCO.

"Both parties are working on it at present".

At OTTCO, we are leveraging our expertise in energy logistics, domestic regulation, operational matters and in the available capacity and utilisation of the liquid jetty at the Port of Duqm. Vopak, for its part, is deploying its technical teams to initiate discussions on the masterplan study".

Speaking to the Observer, Al Maamari said the new joint venture company — owned 51% by OTTCO and 49% by Vopak — will support both traditional energy flows and the evolving demands of the global energy transition towards more integrated and sustainable ecosystems.

"This strategic agreement between the two parties will enable the inflow of technology and expertise necessary to sustain Duqm's development into a hub for the storage and handling of green energy products.

While our existing storage terminal at Ras Markaz will remain dedicated to petroleum products, there is still space available at the Liquid Terminal within the port for the development of capacity to handle and store green energy commodities", the official noted.

Significantly, the development of the new storage and handling infrastructure at the Liquid Terminal is envisioned in phases, depending on the

requirements of investors developing major green hydrogen and other low-carbon fuel projects in Duqm SEZ.

Initial capacity is envisaged primarily for green ammonia destined for export to overseas markets.

As for the storage of export-oriented green hydrogen itself, this is not immediately contemplated because of the costs and inherent technological challenges associated with handling and shipping this commodity.

Nevertheless, green hydrogen earmarked for domestic utilisation will need to be suitably stored — a requirement that broadly falls under

OTTCO's mandate as the National Champion for centralised green ammonia storage within the country's strategy.

As part of this mandate, OTTCO is tasked with building and managing common-user infrastructure to enable economies of scale and avoid duplication across developers in the green molecules value chain.

OTTCO currently operates the Ras Markaz crude oil storage terminal, with a total capacity of 26.7 million barrels, including 5.2 million barrels dedicated to the Duqm Refinery. The company also manages the Port of Duqm storage and export terminal.

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The programme is designed to cultivate well-rounded customer-focused bankers equipped with practical banking knowledge, service excellence and sales capabilities.

NBO launches Universal Banker Programme initiative

MUSCAT: The National Bank of Oman (NBO), in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, has announced launching the Universal Banker Programme, a dedicated two-year training and employment initiative tailored for diploma graduates aiming to build a career in retail banking.

The first-of-its-kind programme in the Sultanate of Oman for diploma holders, the Universal Banker Programme is designed to cultivate well-rounded customer-focused bankers equipped with practical banking knowledge, service excellence and sales capabilities. It reflects NBO's continued investment in Omani youth and its commitment to supporting national employment objectives in line with Oman Vision 2040.

Commenting on the launch, Dr Ali bin Moosa al Abri, Chief Human Resources Officer at NBO, stated, "At NBO, we see every graduate not just as a new hire but as a future leader. The Universal Banker Programme is a long-term investment in the next generation of Omani talent.

By combining practical banking skills with a deep understanding of customer needs, we aim to build a workforce that drives service excellence and supports the continued evolution of the financial sector".

Under this initiative, selected candidates will be placed across NBO and Muzn Islamic Banking branches nationwide, including in direct sales roles. Eligibility criteria for applicants include holding a diploma qualification, graduating in 2023 or later, achieving a minimum CGPA of 2.70, and being registered as a job seeker with the Ministry of Labour. Candidates must not have previously benefitted from similar governmental or private sector programmes.

The programme offers participants a clear path for career growth, wide-ranging training and development opportunities and exposure to NBO's performance driven culture. It reinforces the bank's role as a leading enabler of talent development within the financial sector.

50 years: Saud Bahwan & Toyota celebrate milestone

SAUD Bahwan Automotive and Toyota Motor Corporation recently celebrated a distinguished milestone marking 50 years of partnership and progress at the Al Bustan Palace hotel. The event celebrated a remarkable journey built on trust, innovation and shared success that has shaped Oman's automotive landscape for five decades.

The grand ballroom reflected an elegant atmosphere that highlighted the legacy and values of both organisations. Guests were welcomed by a display of iconic Toyota vehicles representing each decade of the partnership; a visual testament to Toyota's evolution in Oman.

Inside, a specially designed "Milestones Wall" showcased key moments from Toyota's journey in Oman, highlighting its consistent focus on quality, reliability and customer satisfaction.

The event brought together dignitaries, senior representatives from Toyota Motor Corporation and distinguished guests from Oman. The evening opened with a welcome address by Abdullah Bin Mohammed Saud Bahwan, Chief Executive Officer of Saud Bahwan Group, who reflected on the partnership's enduring strength.

"What started in 1975 as a humble partnership has grown into one of the most successful collaborations in Oman's automotive history, built on trust, integrity and a shared commitment to excellence", he remarked. He expressed his appreciation to Toyota Motor for its unwavering support and



Masaru Shimada, Chief Officer of the Toyota India and Middle East Division at Toyota Motor Corporation sharing his thoughts.

innovation over the years.

"From the legendary Land Cruiser that conquered our deserts to the latest hybrid models driving us towards a sustainable future, Toyota has continuously set benchmarks for quality and reliability", he said, acknowledging the generations of loyal customers whose trust has fuelled this enduring success.

Looking ahead, he added, "As we celebrate this golden jubilee, we are not just looking back with pride, but forward with determination.

Together with Toyota, we are committed to leading the way in sustainable mobility, guided by innovation and inspired by the trust of our customers. Here's to fifty years of excellence and to many more decades of partnership and progress".

Following his address, Masaru Shimada, Chief Officer of the Toyota India and Middle



Abdullah bin Mohammed Saud Bahwan, Chief Executive Officer of Saud Bahwan Group presents a commemorative gift to Masaru Shimada, Chief Officer of the Toyota India and Middle East Division at Toyota Motor Corporation.

East Division at Toyota Motor Corporation, spoke about Toyota's deep connection with Oman and the significance of the partnership. Speaking with warmth, he described Oman's significance in Toyota's global journey not merely as a market, but as a partner in progress.

In a heartfelt tribute, Shimada honoured the late Shaikh Saud Bahwan, whose vision and determination first brought Toyota to Oman in 1975, a time when the brand was virtually unknown in the region.

He spoke of how Shaikh Saud's unwavering focus on customer satisfaction and after-sales excellence laid the foundation for success, a spirit carried forward by Shaikh Mohammed Bahwan and now Shaikh Abdullah Bahwan.

"Thanks to the unwavering commitment of three

generations of the Bahwan family", he said, "Toyota has become an integral part of daily life in Oman". Looking ahead, Shimada reaffirmed Toyota's commitment to advancing sustainable mobility in step with Oman Vision 2040.

He highlighted Toyota's "multi-pathway" approach towards carbon neutrality, embracing hybrid, electric and hydrogen technologies and expressed pride in Oman's pioneering role with Toyota Mirai vehicles as part of the nation's first hydrogen initiative.

Concluding on an inspiring note, he said, "Together, Toyota and Saud Bahwan Automotive will continue to move forward like two wheels of the same vehicle, driven by trust, innovation and the shared mission to produce happiness for all".

OMAN HOSTS 9TH EDITION OF OFSEC ON NOVEMBER 11-12

MUSCAT: The 9th Edition of OFSEC — Oman's only and most comprehensive exhibition on fire, safety and security will take place from November 11-12, 2025, from 10 am — 7 pm at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.

This year OFSEC brings together over more than 90+ exhibitors from over 20 countries who will showcase their avant-garde solutions, latest technologies, cutting edge innovations, cost-effective products and services to meet the requirements of governments, businesses, industrial and commercial entities, aviation, construction, infrastructure, transportation,

9th Edition OFSEC

OMAN FIRE, SAFETY & SECURITY EVENT

manufacturing, oil and gas and utilities sectors.

OFSEC is designed to meet the needs of the local, regional and international markets by linking practitioners, suppliers, distributors and manufacturers from the fire, safety and security industry, with key decision makers from

the government and private sectors making it a definitive networking platform, where new projects and partnerships are initiated and visionary objectives are implemented.

This event also aims to create synergy and strengthen the collaboration between the authorities and the industries.

The OFSEC Summit will feature an expansive line-up of 25+ stellar speakers, case studies, panel discussions, unique presentations providing access to a wealth of industry leading knowledge, sharing best practices and experiences, spotlighting trends, information exchange, insights and outlooks with actionable takeaways.

BankDhofar graduates 40 from Leadership Development Programme

MUSCAT: BankDhofar celebrated the graduation of 40 employees from its Leadership Development Programme, marking a key milestone in the bank's ongoing commitment to nurturing future leaders and contributing to national capacity-building efforts across the Sultanate of Oman.

The six-month programme aligns with Oman's broader vision of cultivating competent, innovative leaders capable of driving institutional excellence and societal progress. It brought together a distinguished group of participants from both government entities and the private sector, underscoring the bank's

belief in the value of strategic collaboration and knowledge exchange.

The graduation ceremony was held under the auspices of Ahmed bin Jaafar al Musalmi, Governor of the Central Bank of Oman and attended by senior officials from BankDhofar.

Developed in collaboration with the Indian School of Business (ISB) — an institution academically affiliated with the Wharton School, Kellogg School of Management and London Business School — the Leadership Development Programme aims to enhance the capabilities of Omani professionals by exposing them to global leadership



The six-month programme aligns with Oman's broader vision of cultivating competent, innovative leaders.

models, best practices and transformative management concepts.

It seeks to empower national talent in line with the objectives of Oman Vision

2040.

Dr Khalid bin Salem al Hamdani, Chief Human Resources Officer at BankDhofar, stated: "We are proud to celebrate the graduation of a new cohort from the Leadership Development Programme, which reflects our strategic commitment to developing human capital and strengthening national competencies.

The programme is carefully designed to equip participants with advanced leadership skills, broaden their professional perspectives; and inspire creativity and initiative".

Dr Al Hamdani emphasised that investing in people

remains one of the bank's highest priorities, reflecting its belief in cultivating leadership from within to sustain institutional excellence and long-term success. "We congratulate the graduates on this achievement and look forward to witnessing their continued contributions as they take on future leadership roles", he added.

In alignment with Oman Vision 2040 and national initiatives focused on training and employment, BankDhofar also continues to implement its Ruwad Programme, launched eight years ago to prepare fresh graduates for careers in banking.

SHORTTAKES

TISCS KEY TO DRIVING NATIONAL INNOVATION: WIPO

HIBBA AL KINDI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

TECHNOLOGY and Innovation Support Centres, better known as TISCs, are key to driving innovation, according to Andrew Czajkowski, Acting Senior Director, IP for Innovators Department at the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

At the recent regional meeting for Arab TISCs hosted by the Sultanate of Oman, Czajkowski explained how TISCs and innovation go hand in hand. “Well-developed intellectual property and innovation ecosystems are essential for enabling inventors, researchers and entrepreneurs to fulfil their potential, create value from their inventions and contribute to social and economic development... Around the world, countries are placing

increasing emphasis on intellectual property to sustain growth and prosperity. Those that invest in strengthening their innovation ecosystems, promoting the use of IP and supporting technology-driven enterprises are better placed to thrive in uncertain times”, he said. The official further added: “Technology and Innovation Support Centres play an important role by providing access to and supporting the effective use of, the vast knowledge contained in the global patent system. TISCs now offer a wide range of services, including patent search and analytics, support for IP management, technology transfer and new product development. These services span the entire innovation cycle, from the spark of an idea to development and commercialisation”. Significantly, there are now over 1,650 TISCs in 94 countries, Czajkowski pointed out. “According to our 2024 end-of-year survey, TISCs worldwide received more than 2.25 million inquiries that year”, he noted In remarks to the Observer, Czajkowski also explained that TISCs currently focus heavily on universities.



ANDREW CZAJKOWSKI
Acting Senior Director, IP for Innovators Department at the World Intellectual Property Organisation

JOMAR MENDOZA
MUSCAT, NOV 10

OMAN'S ambition to transition towards a circular economy and diversify its energy mix has drawn significant international interest, as Nama Power and Water Procurement (Nama PWP) announced the submissions for its pioneering Waste-to-Energy (WtE) Project.

The project, a cornerstone of the Sultanate of Oman's sustainable development strategy, has attracted Statements of Qualification from 18 high-calibre international and local companies spanning ten different countries. The diverse geographical spread of the applicants — including firms from the USA, China, Spain, Switzerland, Japan, Singapore, Kuwait, France, UAE and the Sultanate of Oman — underscores the project's strategic importance and the confidence international developers place in Oman's rapidly developing infrastructure market. The WtE facility is strategically planned for the Wilayat of Barka, Al Batinah South Governorate. It is designed around a reliable Grate Incineration process and is tasked with treating a massive volume of municipal solid waste, specifically 3,000 tonnes per day. The project is expected to deliver significant environmental and energy benefits. Its key technical specifications include a power generation capacity of 95-100 Megawatts (MW), with an estimated Renewable Energy Contribution of 757 GWh per year. Furthermore, the facility is projected to achieve a substantial reduction in CO₂ emissions,



The WtE facility is strategically planned for the Wilayat of Barka, Al Batinah South Governorate.

The diverse geographical spread of the applicants — including firms from the USA, China, Spain, Switzerland, Japan, Singapore, Kuwait, France, UAE and the Sultanate of Oman — underscores the project's strategic importance and the confidence international developers place in Oman's rapidly developing infrastructure market.

estimated at 302,000 tonnes annually. The project will occupy a land area of 190,000 sqm and is targeting a Scheduled Commercial Operation Date for the fourth quarter of 2030. This initiative, which Nama PWP is developing in collaboration with Oman Environmental Services Holding Company (be'ah), aligns perfectly with Oman's broader economic and environmental objectives, including its commitment to achieving Net Zero emissions. The following companies submitted Statements of Qualification for the Waste-to-Energy Project, demonstrating strong global interest in Oman's renewable and sustainable infrastructure development. The list includes a mix of powerful international consortiums and key local players, signalling a highly competitive bidding

environment. With the successful submission of the Statements of Qualification, Nama PWP will now undertake a rigorous evaluation process to determine the short-listed developers. These qualified companies will then be invited to participate in the final Request for Proposals (RFP) stage. The high level of participation by international energy and waste management giants, many of whom are already invested in Oman's power sector, indicates a fierce competition for this Build, Own and Operate (BOO) framework contract. The project is seen not only as a crucial component of Oman's energy diversification but also as a definitive step in the country's transition towards a circular economy by turning a major waste stream into a reliable source of power.

Oman hosts Middle East LPG Summit and Expo 2025

SAEED AL MASHARFI
MUSCAT, NOV 10

The Middle East LPG Summit and Exhibition 2025 launched yesterday under the auspices of Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre. Organised by the World Liquid Gas Association (WLGA) in cooperation with the Ministry, the two-day summit aims to explore the future of the LPG industry and strengthen international collaboration through presentations on innovative technologies, advanced safety systems, digital transformation and women's empowerment in the energy sector. The two-day summit convenes more than 2,000 experts from 30 countries, alongside 80 international companies showcasing cutting-edge developments in LPG technologies,



As a strategic resource, LPG supports Oman's economic diversification and value-added industries: Dr Masan

supply chain solutions and energy efficiency. The event also witnessed the launch of the first Middle East chapter of the Women in LPG Network (WINLPG), highlighting Oman's ongoing efforts to promote women's participation and leadership within industrial and energy fields. Dr Saleh bin Said Masan,

Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry, highlighted the Ministry's commitment to advancing Oman's economic transformation, noting that Industrial Strategy 2040 prioritises expanding the industrial sector and boosting its contribution to GDP.

He emphasised that LPG is a strategic resource supporting economic diversification and value-added industries; and pointed to Oman's ongoing investments in renewable energy, green hydrogen, advanced technologies and digital transformation as key drivers of sustainable growth. In his remarks, James Rockall, CEO and Managing Director of the WLGA, praised Oman's strong and long-standing position in global energy markets. He noted that the Sultanate of Oman is “one of the region's most established energy exporters, with deep connections across the Gulf and beyond”, adding that the government's openness to cooperation continues to attract global partnerships. Rockall stressed that aligning with Oman Vision 2040 presents significant opportunities for LPG to play “an increasingly important role in supporting the

country's economic and energy ambitions”, reinforcing Oman's position as a rising hub in the evolving energy landscape. During his presentation, Dr Rachid Majjad, CEO of National Gas Company, underscored the importance of gradually reducing the subsidy burden on industrial LPG consumption. He explained that a structured 10-year adjustment plan could generate more than RO 113 million in additional revenue for the government — funds that would strengthen Oman's fiscal position and widen budgetary space for renewable energy initiatives, industrial efficiency programmes and innovation. He added that the proposal aligns with Oman Vision 2040 and supports macroeconomic stability, noting that part of the recovered subsidy could be reinvested to help SMEs adapt during the transition.

TRADE TENSIONS

Europe faces heavier tariff blow



European businesses expect a sharper economic hit in 2026 from US tariffs and trade frictions, according to a BusinessEurope survey. The study found that while front-loading cushioned the impact in 2025, GDP across the eurozone and EU could fall by 0.5–0.6 percentage points next year. The euro zone is forecast to be the worst affected as trade tensions intensify. — Reuters

ENERGY MARKETS

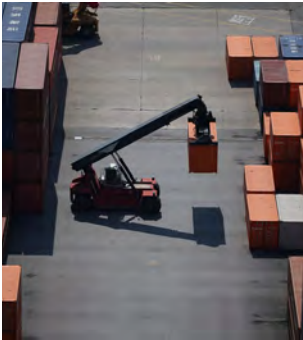
Oil rises on shutdown hopes



Oil prices climbed on Monday amidst optimism over a possible resolution to the US government shutdown, boosting demand expectations. Brent crude rose 50 cents to \$63.69 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate gained 53 cents to \$59.85. Meanwhile, the US Senate advanced a measure to reopen the government after a 40-day closure that disrupted services and delayed aid. — Reuters

GLOBAL BOOM

Korean exports reach record high



South Korea's exports surged to a record \$185 billion in the third quarter, fuelled by robust semiconductor demand amidst the global AI boom, Yonhap News Agency reported on Monday. The 6.5 per cent year-on-year rise marked the highest quarterly figure since 2010 and the second straight quarter of growth. Strong chip exports helped offset unresolved tariff disputes with the United States. — ONA

OPINION

Tips to secure your WhatsApp communications



TARIQ
AL BARWANI

The writer is strategic adviser, businessman and motivational speaker.

MY last week’s article, “Is WhatsApp Private?” “No” received a lot of attention and sparked meaningful discussions among readers. The article explored how WhatsApp, despite its claims of end-to-end encryption, still shares certain types of metadata and user information with its parent company, Meta (previously known as Facebook).

Many were surprised to learn how much insight can be gained from this data, from contact lists to usage patterns and how privacy on the app isn’t as secure as many believe.

The feedback showed just how concerned people are about the safety of their conversations and that is exactly why this week’s article will focus on how one can secure their WhatsApp chats and protect their communications.

When it comes to WhatsApp, most users face a silent trade-off between convenience and privacy. The app’s easy-to-use messaging, media sharing and group features make communication effortless, but that convenience often comes at a hidden cost, unfortunately.

Every click, call and contact creates data points that can reveal patterns about your behaviour, ie, who you talk to most, what

time you’re active and even where you might be (location).

While these details may seem harmless, they feed into a much larger digital ecosystem where information is analysed, monetised and sometimes even exposed through breaches. It’s the modern dilemma we all face: where the easier an app makes our lives, the more of ourselves we often give away in return. Period.

The good news is that protecting your WhatsApp chats does not require advanced technical skills, just a few smart habits that you can follow to help protect your private communications.

First, start by enabling the two-step verification, which adds an extra layer of security beyond your regular login. This simple feature can prevent unauthorised access even if someone manages to get your SIM card or phone. The feature is available under the WhatsApp settings.

Next, make it a routine to lock your WhatsApp with biometrics, be it with fingerprint or face ID and ensure your device itself has a strong passcode. Furthermore, be cautious with backups too, as these chat backups that are stored on Google Drive or iCloud are not encrypted, meaning your conversations could be vulnerable if those

When it comes to WhatsApp, most users face a silent trade-off between convenience and privacy. The app’s easy-to-use messaging, media sharing and group features make communication effortless, but that convenience often comes at a hidden cost, unfortunately.

accounts are compromised. For sensitive discussions, consider disabling cloud backups altogether. And perhaps most importantly, avoid clicking suspicious links or downloading unknown attachments, as phishing remains one of the most common ways hackers gain access to private data.

WhatsApp’s massive reach, roughly about 3 billion monthly users, makes it a high-value target for attackers, hackers and state-level spyware. One of the prominent cybersecurity campaigns exploited a 2019 WhatsApp vulnerability to target about 1,400 users that include media journalists, activists and diplomats.

Furthermore, mobile threat monitoring firms report huge volumes of malicious activity targeting phones (over 1.1 million malicious and potentially unwanted mobile packages detected in 2024), underscoring that app security is only one part of the risk picture.

Clearly these are only a few of the reported incidents on WhatsApp and instant messaging, lacking total privacy per se.

To conclude my article this week, let me emphasise that securing WhatsApp isn’t about paranoia; it’s, in fact, about sensible defaults that one can follow.

TRUMP CAN DELAY BUT NOT STOP GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION

HUGO DIXON

Donald Trump will be a ghost at the annual United Nations climate conference that starts this week in Brazil. The US president’s campaign in favour of fossil fuels and against global action to prevent climate change will store up trouble for future generations. But all is not gloom. Technological, geopolitical, economic and financial trends are far stronger.

No senior US official will be attending the conference known as COP30. Trump has also given notice that America will quit the Paris climate agreement for the second time. That’s not all. His administration has cut green incentives while pushing hydrocarbon projects at home. It has also slashed climate aid and pulled out of plans to support South Africa, Vietnam and Indonesia with their clean energy transitions.

Meanwhile, the United States has bullied the rest of the world into abandoning a plan to tax carbon emissions from shipping. The White House is also pushing allies to buy its gas. The Net-Zero Banking Alliance, a coalition of lenders, disbanded last month under political pressure. Trump even twisted the words of Bill Gates, the tech entrepreneur, to declare: “I (WE!) just won the War on the Climate Change Hoax”.

Not so fast. The president is just one player in the battle over climate change and not even the most powerful. While Washington is pushing old dirty technologies, Beijing is championing new clean ones. This is partly for economic reasons. China dominates the production of solar panels, batteries and electric vehicles. It is deploying these in vast quantities at home and pumping them out abroad to sustain its growth.

The People’s Republic also believes that, by focussing on clean technologies, it can close the innovation gap with the United States. What is more, its reliance on fossil fuel imports creates a strategic vulnerability. Renewables give it energy security.

Other parts of the world that depend on imported hydrocarbons are thinking the same way. The European Union has learnt the folly of relying on Russian gas. Meanwhile, India, Africa and other sunbelt regions want to use a natural resource that shines at home rather than spend scarce foreign exchange to buy energy from abroad.

The world is experiencing what Ember, a climate think tank, calls an “electrotech revolution”. Subsidies and government policies kickstarted solar power, wind power and batteries.

— Reuters

FDI pathway: Special zones, people, GVC links

OMAN’S story has always been about connection: seafaring routes, bustling ports and the quiet pride of making things well. That same spirit can power our next leap — by turning our ports and zones into launchpads for higher-value production and our classrooms and workshops into engines of skills development.

The logic is familiar to any household: when you learn better, you make better; when you make better, you sell better. The World Economic Forum calls this the “quality of growth” — balancing speed with resilience, innovation, inclusion and sustainability — so that prosperity lasts and reaches more people.

For countries like Oman, that agenda is not abstract policy; it is the practical route to more stable jobs, rising incomes and confidence that our economy can weather global shocks while moving up the ladder of sophistication.

The practical path is a recipe with four ingredients that work together. First, attract and anchor foreign direct investment (FDI) — not just capital, but partnerships that bring technology, managerial systems and access to markets.

Second, plug our firms into global value chains (GVCs) so they specialise where Oman can be world-class: components and precision processing, testing and certification, after-sales services and spares. Third, use our special economic zones (SEZs) as the production kitchen where approvals are quick, standards are high and logistics are seamless.

Finally, place people at the centre through capability development that turns new factories into real schools of practice. International evidence is consistent: FDI and GVC participation reinforce each other when countries focus on supplier upgrading and skills, rather than on tax relief alone.

Why does FDI matter so much? Because the shortest road to know-how is to work beside those who already have it. But it only works when deals are designed well. Incentives should be earned by what truly upgrades



Our SEZs are where ambition becomes action.



DR YOUSUF
HAMED
AL BALUSHI
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The writer is founder and CEO - Smart Investment Gateway, economists, board adviser & business transformation mentor

For countries like Oman, that agenda is not abstract policy; it is the practical route to more stable jobs, rising incomes and confidence that our economy can weather global shocks while moving up the ladder of sophistication.

Oman: supplier development with measurable improvements in first-pass yield and on-time delivery; certified training that moves Omanis into higher-value roles; and local engineering content — tooling, maintenance and process optimisation — so factories here can solve problems fast.

This is the difference between “fly-in, fly-out” operations and anchored partnerships that diffuse technology and routines into local firms. Global research shows that when governments require supplier development and skills transfer, FDI becomes a powerful escalator for productivity, complexity and export competitiveness, rather than a race for subsidies.

Our SEZs are where ambition becomes action. In April 2025, Oman unified and modernised the legal framework for special economic and free zones under Royal Decree 38/2025, signalling predictability on permits, guarantees, benefits and incentives.

That legal clarity is a green light to structure “make-and-teach” agreements with every major investor — producing here and training here — backed by quarterly reporting on supplier upgrades and skill certifications. It also helps zones compete globally for time-sensitive manufacturing that values reliability, speed and rules-based administration.

With this foundation, Sohar can deepen metals and engineered plastics components, Duqm can anchor energy-transition equipment and heavy-industry services, and Salalah can lead in agri-food processing and cold-chain. The point is simple: zones must reward export sophistication, not just volume, so that Oman steadily

moves up the value curve. People sit at the centre of this plan. Oman Vision 2040 sets a national priority on education, learning, research and capabilities — the hinge that turns investment into productivity. For families, this simply means more pathways where study leads to skilled work and better pay.

For firms, it means dual-track training inside zones — 12–18 months on real production lines, leading to trusted certificates for line leaders, maintena

The WEF’s competitiveness work echoes the same message: countries that invest in human capital — technical skills, problem-solving, digital fluency — are the ones that turn openness into sustained competitiveness. When we combine classroom foundations with on-the-job learning, we create a workforce that doesn’t just operate machines, but improves them.

What does success look like in practice? More value per kilogramme shipped; a steady pipeline of Omani SMEs that pass international standards; and a shift in what we sell — from basic materials to components, specialty chemicals, engineered plastics, precision food processing and after-market services.

Integration into GVCs tends to increase export value density when firms move beyond basic assembly into design, testing, branding and services; the evidence is clear that upgrading raises productivity and incomes.

The Gulf’s position adds tailwinds: global firms are re-routing supply chains and want reliable, open locations with strong logistics and predictability.

Oman can stand out by promising a rules-based environment in zones, rapid approvals and a distinctive offer — “make here, train here and grow here” — that links incentives to measurable learning and supplier improvement.

In the end, this is not a leap of faith but a matter of good housekeeping. Keep the oven at the right temperature — stable rules, capable zones and steady investment in people — and the dish will rise. Anchor FDI with learning, measure what matters and tell the world our offer with confidence.

Importance of ESG for businesses

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 10

When capital starts rewarding cleaner, better-run businesses, attention quickly turns to ESG.

The next Tejarah Talks will examine how environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards are reshaping business priorities, finance and competitiveness.

Organised by the Oman Business Forum in partnership with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, the session

will take place at 11 am, December 3, at Oman Arab Bank's Head Office in Al Ghubra North.

Panellists include Dr Aisha al Sarihi, Economic Adviser, Ministry of Economy; Wendy Werner, the World Bank Country Manager, Oman; and Hanife Ymer, ESG Adviser, Development Bank. The discussion will be moderated by Jamal al Asmi, Creative Growth Director, Mubashir.

Once treated as an optional badge of good behaviour, ESG has become a measure of commercial



BADRIYA AL AMRI
OF OMAN
BUSINESS FORUM
OFFICE

credibility.

The Muscat Stock Exchange now requires all listed firms to file ESG reports and Central Bank of Oman has instructed

lenders to assess environmental and social risks when pricing loans. The trend is global.

A 2024 PwC survey found that 85% of consumers have felt the effects of climate change and are willing to pay almost 10% more for products they trust to be responsibly produced.

At the same time, KPMG research shows that nine in 10 publicly-traded companies now have ESG initiatives in place and nearly all senior executives say they feel pressure to prioritise them. In other words, ESG is no longer

a matter of image, it is shaping how companies are judged by investors, regulators and customers alike.

“ESG is moving from aspiration to accounting”, said Badriya al Amri, Oman Business Forum Office and co-organiser of Tejarah Talks.

“Companies that can show credible data, how they use resources, treat people and govern themselves will find access to finance easier and cheaper”.

The panel will look at what this means in practice

— Omani exporters facing Europe's carbon-border adjustment charges, manufacturers under scrutiny from supply-chain audits and smaller firms finding their first steps into ESG reporting.

As Al Amri noted, “The question isn't whether ESG matters but how quickly local businesses can adapt. Those that act early will not only comply, they'll compete”.

Tejarah Talks continues to serve as a forum for practical discussion on themes reshaping Oman's business environment.

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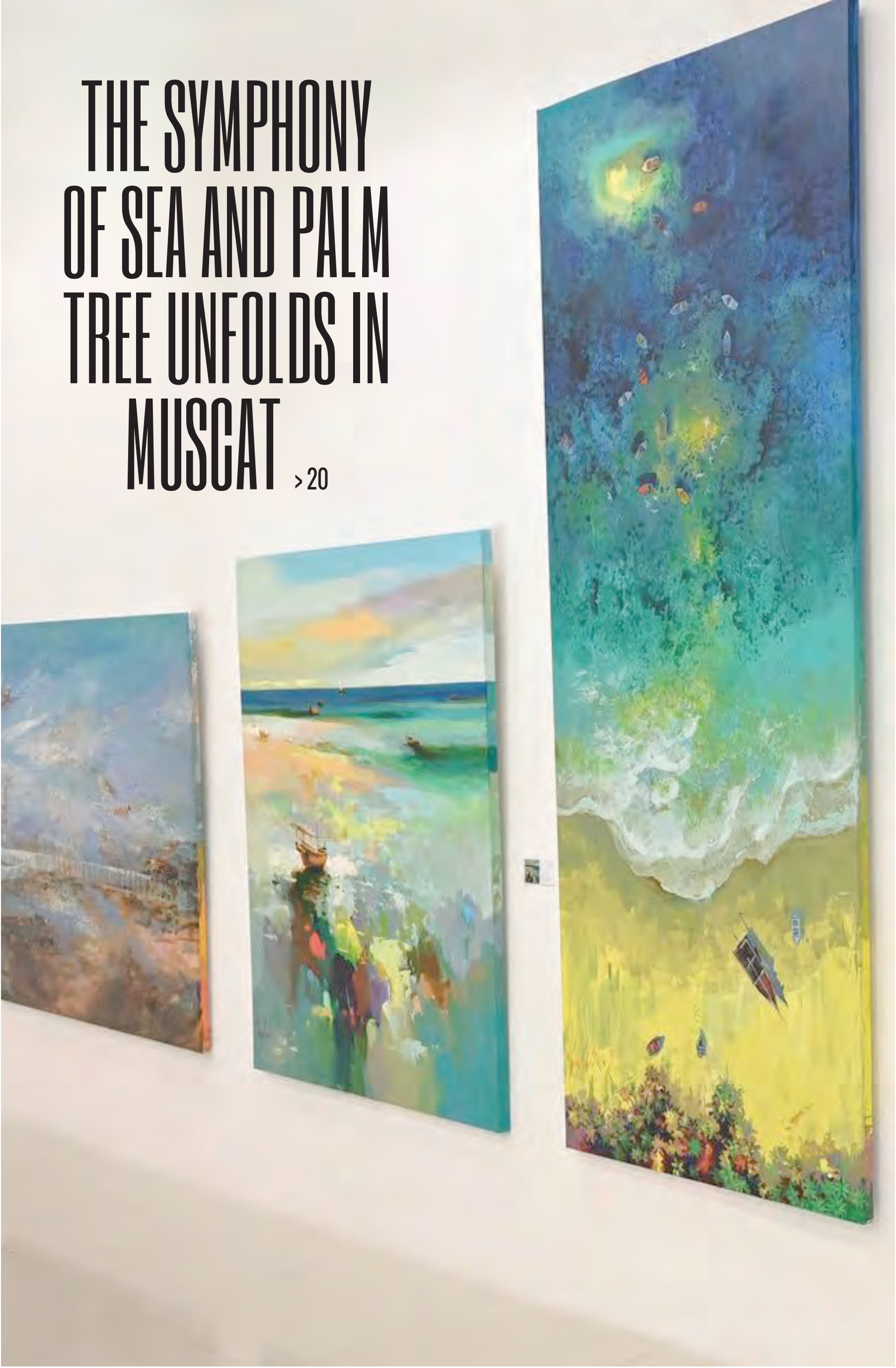


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ART/LIFE



THE SYMPHONY OF SEA AND PALM TREE UNFOLDS IN MUSCAT > 20

EXPEDITION

Oman 3165: A voyage for sustainability



NAJAH AL RIYAMI

With just days remaining before the launch of the Oman 3165 Expedition, excitement is mounting for a journey that will celebrate Oman's maritime heritage while showcasing sustainability in action.

Set to begin in Musandam Governorate, the 70-day expedition will trace the entire length of Oman's coastline — a remarkable 3,165 kilometres from north to south — entirely by kayak. Led by veteran explorer Mark Evans, MBE, the expedition's name reflects the distance it will cover, weaving a story of endurance, exploration and environmental responsibility.

The initiative is powered by the strong support of Asyad Shipping, which has provided vital technical and logistical backing. Asyad's partnership reflects its growing commitment to sustainability and deep-rooted connection to Oman's maritime legacy. Evans credited Captain Khalil al Hooti and the Asyad Shipping team for their instrumental role in shaping the project's sustainable vision.

A broad coalition of partners — including the Royal Geographical Society, Durham University, Penn State University, Ocean Generation and British School Muscat — will help translate expedition data and storytelling into scientific insights and classroom learning.

Retracing ancient coastal routes once navigated by Omani traders and fishermen, the Oman 3165 Expedition connects the nation's seafaring past with its modern sustainability goals. The team aims to highlight how coastal communities are adapting to climate change, preserving marine ecosystems and balancing development with conservation.

Through digital storytelling and school engagement in Oman and abroad, the journey will inspire youth to view the ocean as a living classroom.

As the kayaks prepare to launch from Musandam's rugged fjords, the Oman 3165 Expedition stands as both a physical and symbolic voyage — reaffirming Oman's identity as a nation shaped by the sea and committed to a sustainable future.

QUICK FEATURES

EVENTS

Netflix TV show star Jenna Ortega attends FYC event for the television series 'Wednesday', in Los Angeles. — Reuters



AUTUMN

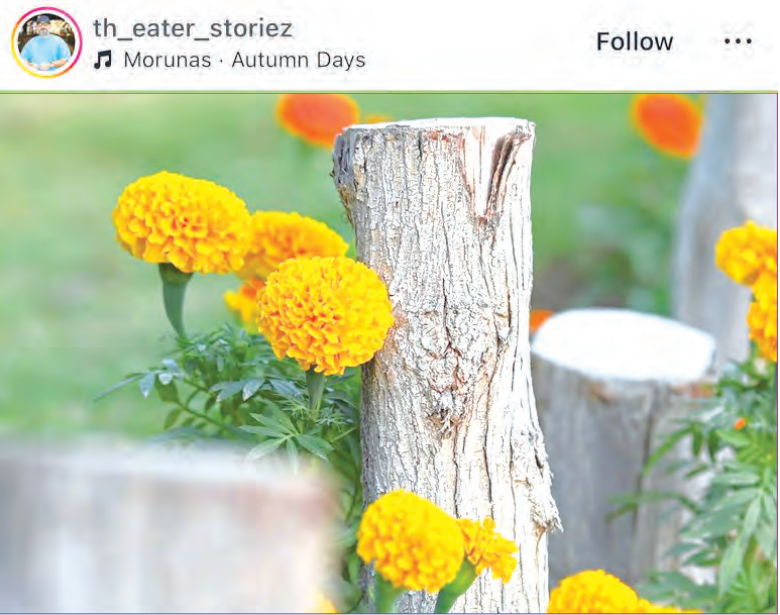
Visitors take pictures beneath the yellow leaves of the autumn trees at the Gyeongbokgung Palace in central Seoul. — AFP



YULETIDE

The moon is seen behind Christmas baubles hanging from a tree in the soon to open Christmas market in Magdeburg, eastern Germany. — AFP

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



Flowers blooming in nature



The aesthetic corners of Muttrah Souq

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Korean haegeum captivates Muscat audience



Korean haegeum player Nalsae Shin is accompanied by pianist Park Sehwan and cellist Choi Jungwook

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Oman successfully hosted the concert ‘A Journey of Korean Strings in Muscat’ on November 6, Thursday, at the Bait Al Zubair Museum.

Renowned Korean haegeum player Nalsae Shin, accompanied by pianist Park Sehwan and cellist Choi Jungwook, presented a diverse repertoire ranging from traditional Korean melodies to contemporary popular pieces. Their performance offered a mesmerising harmony that bridged Korean and international musical expressions.

The hour-long concert drew a large audience, including members of the diplomatic community, local cultural figures and music enthusiasts. Attendees were moved by the haegeum’s soulful sound — often likened to the human voice — and its delicate dialogue with



the piano and cello. Many described the experience as ‘a beautiful encounter of tradition and modernity’. The Embassy noted that the concert was part of ongoing efforts to foster friendship and mutual understanding between Korea and Oman through cultural exchange. By introducing the haegeum — a two-stringed traditional instrument known for its expressive tone — the event offered the Omani public a unique glimpse into Korea’s rich artistic heritage.



People stand next to a centuries-old shipwreck uncovered in the aftermath of Typhoon Kalmaegi on a beach off the Hoi An coast in central Vietnam. — AFP

SEVERE coastal erosion caused by Typhoon Kalmaegi exposed a centuries-old shipwreck in Vietnam, providing a narrow window to salvage what experts say could be a historically significant find. Initially discovered in 2023 off the coast of Hoi An, the at least 17.4-metre vessel — whose heavy wood-ribbed hull survived hundreds of years of rough seas almost perfectly intact — was resubmerged before authorities could reclaim it. Experts have not yet dated the wreck, but preliminary findings suggest it was built between the 14th and 16th centuries — when Unesco-listed Hoi An was at the centre of a thriving regional trade in silk, ceramics and spices.

“We are currently preparing to apply for an emergency excavation (permit),” Pham Phu Ngoc, director of the Hoi An Centre for the Preservation of World Cultural Heritage, said on Monday after the wreck resurfaced following the passage of Typhoon Kalmaegi last week. “The discovery of this ancient ship is clear evidence of Hoi An’s significant historical role in regional trade”, he said, adding more of the ship had been exposed this time “which could provide us with more information”. A team of experts from the Hoi An preservation centre, the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Ho Chi Minh City and a local museum surveyed the wreck last year. In addition to the rough age estimate, they found it had been made from “durable and high-strength timber” and reinforced with waterproofing materials to seal its joints.

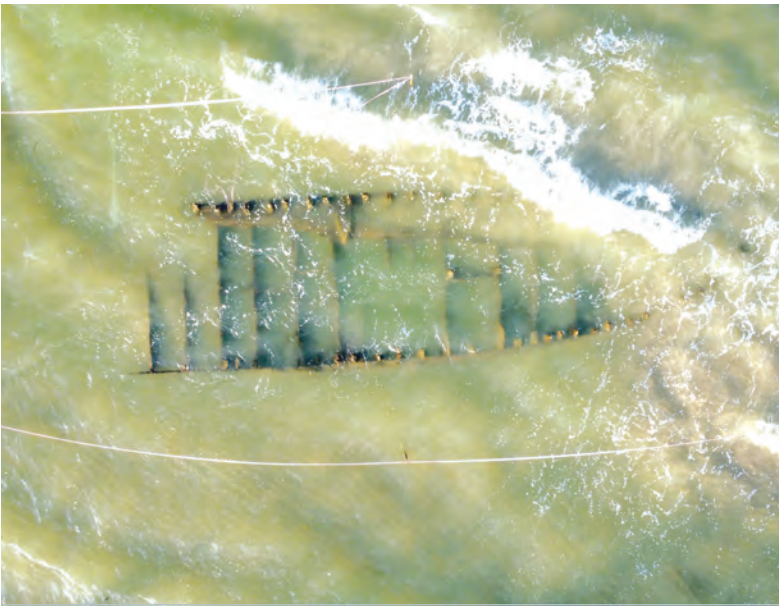
“The ship’s structure suggests that it was capable of long-distance voyages, likely used for maritime trade or naval operations”, the Hoi An centre said in an earlier statement. The relic is at risk of “serious deterioration without immediate conservation actions” given the severe coastal erosion and the ship’s frequent exposure to harsh weather conditions, it said. The wreck was still clearly visible on Monday, with crowds gathered on the beach to view its striking skeletal frame. — AFP

Typhoon unveils ancient shipwreck off Vietnam coast



A man examines a centuries-old shipwreck uncovered in the aftermath of Typhoon Kalmaegi on a beach off the Hoi An coast in central Vietnam. — AFP

THE RELIC IS AT RISK OF ‘SERIOUS DETERIORATION WITHOUT IMMEDIATE CONSERVATION ACTIONS’ GIVEN THE SEVERE COASTAL EROSION



A centuries-old shipwreck uncovered in the aftermath of Typhoon Kalmaegi on a beach off the Hoi An coast in central Vietnam. — AFP

FEATURES



IDRIS AL BALUSHI

THE evening air over Muscat carried the scent of salt as it drifted into the halls of the Cultural Club, as though the sea itself wished to attend the exhibition. Inside, warm gallery lights spilled across canvases that shimmered with movement, waves rising, palm fronds bending, colours shifting in a rhythm that felt both ancient and contemporary. This was “The Symphony of the Sea and the Palm Tree”, the latest exhibition by Bahraini artist Abbas al Mosawi, one of the Gulf’s most enduring impressionist voices. His works glowed as if lit from within, carrying the pulse of the region’s sun, sea and wind. For Al Mosawi, Oman has long been a place that calls him back. In his words, “Oman draws me in with its pull, a quiet seduction of senses shaped by years of visits, friendships and time spent among its mountains and beaches. Living close to the landscape, even briefly, awakened something that demanded to be painted”. He speaks of Oman’s roots, its wild edges and shifting moods; and how its nature becomes a force of inspiration each time he returns.

He considers Oman’s coast unlike any other along the Gulf. Though the region shares one sea, Oman’s shores rise beneath the mountains, creating horizons that break differently throughout the day. While his childhood in Al Naeem offered open, level coastlines, Oman greets him with a dramatic interplay of rock, water and sky, a theatre of light that shapes many of his canvases. His paintings reflect this contrast: blues that fracture into gold, palms that rise like prayers, waves that hold histories.

The life in these works is rooted in memory. He describes growing up only metres from the shipyards, where palm groves surrounded the workshops and craftsmen shaped great wooden vessels. Watching those boats slide into the water left an imprint of awe. The sea became his companion, he spent long hours swimming and floating, learning its rhythms from childhood. Even today, when he swims at the marine club, he feels the younger version of himself still moving in the water. The sea taught him how to float, how to surrender without fear, how to understand its pulse. His waves rise with the weight of this lived intimacy, they remember just as he does.

In the gallery, Al Mosawi reflects on how a painting becomes part of the space it occupies. A beautiful artwork, he believes, never dies. It enters a silent conversation with its surroundings, merging with the atmosphere and becoming a layer of its soul. Each generation meets the same painting with different emotions, discovering new meanings. For him, art carries peace, peace with the sea, the sky, the land and the future. It becomes a vessel for heritage, beauty and hope across the Gulf.

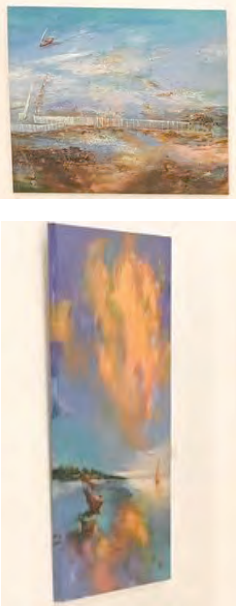
Azhar bint Ahmed al Harithiyah, Director of the Cultural Club, speaks about the significance of hosting such an exhibition. “Abbas al Mosawi is a pioneer”, she notes, describing the show as part of a broader dialogue between Omani artists and creators across the Arab world. She highlights how themes of sea, palm and peace resonate deeply in the region and how exhibitions like this create vital exchanges of experience and culture.

Among the visitors, Omani painter Rashid bin Suleiman al Amri found himself captivated. A portrait artist by training, he described encountering ideas and techniques never seen



THE SYMPHONY OF SEA AND PALM TREE UNFOLDS IN MUSCAT

before. The exhibition, he said, opened new artistic possibilities and enriched the creative scene in Muscat. In his view, Al Mosawi’s work strengthens the artistic bridge between Bahrain and Oman, presenting a distinctly Gulf identity through contemporary experimentation. For Al Mosawi, this innermost connection reflects a truth he holds deeply, the Gulf is one continuous story. He often reflects on how much of the coastline once carried a single name, Bahrain, forming an unbroken stretch of life, trade and culture. That unity still lives in the region’s light, colours, rhythms and art. His paintings become maps of belonging, tracing shared memory rather than borders. As the evening closed and the last visitors stepped into the cooling Muscat night, the canvases remained glowing softly on the walls, alive and waiting. “The Symphony of the Sea and the Palm Tree” stands as more than an exhibition. It is a reminder that the Gulf, with its shorelines and stories, is a single, expansive memory, written in the language of waves, light and palms; and rendered with a mastery that Abbas al Mosawi has carried all his life.



Bahraini impressionist Abbas Al Mosawi’s latest exhibition, ‘The Symphony of the Sea and the Palm Tree,’ celebrates the shared spirit of the Gulf – where sea, light, and memory merge into art. Through his luminous canvases, Al Mosawi captures Oman’s coastal poetry and the enduring bond between nature and heritage

